The Journal of Historical Review

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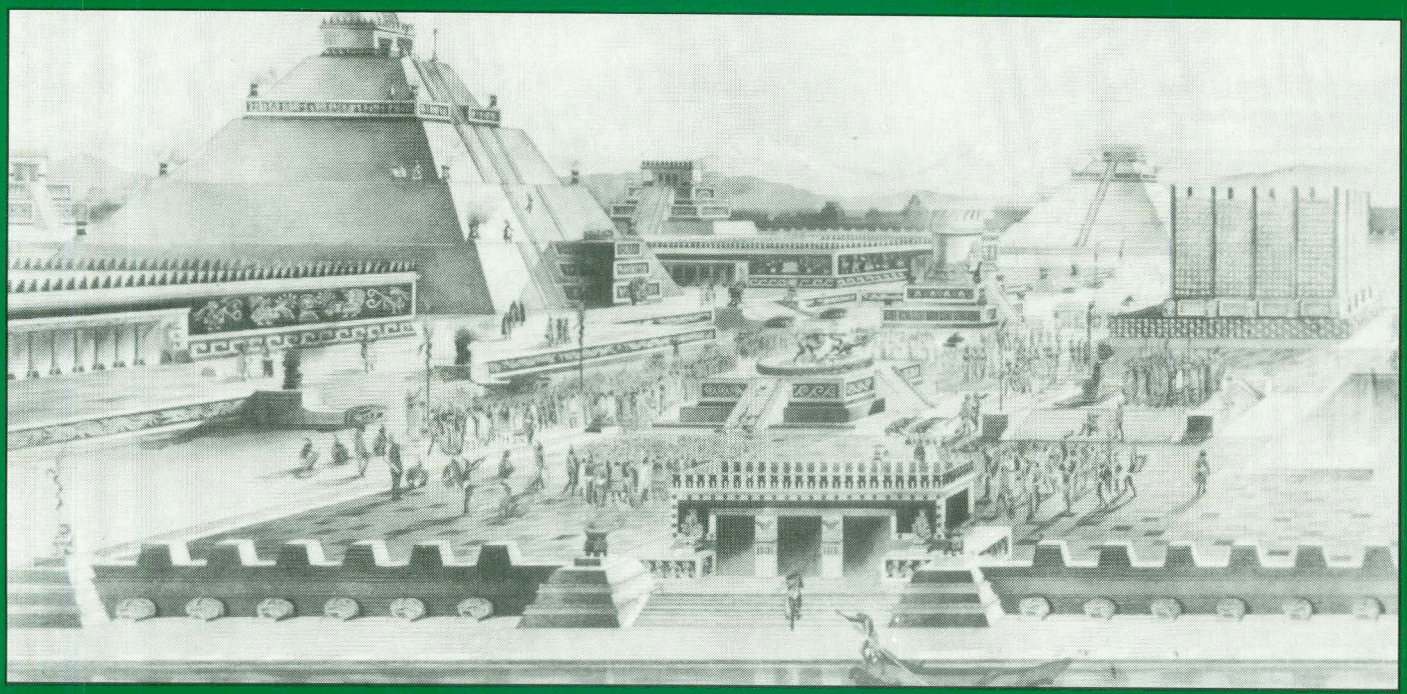

For a Balanced History of the American Indian

Zoltán Bruckner

Bagnold's Bluff: Desert War in North Africa

Trevor J. Constable

Wartime Belgium and its Jews

Mark Weber

How Dangerous is the Swastika?

Free Speech Victory in Spanish 'Holocaust Denial' Case

The Union: Worth a War?

Doug Bandow

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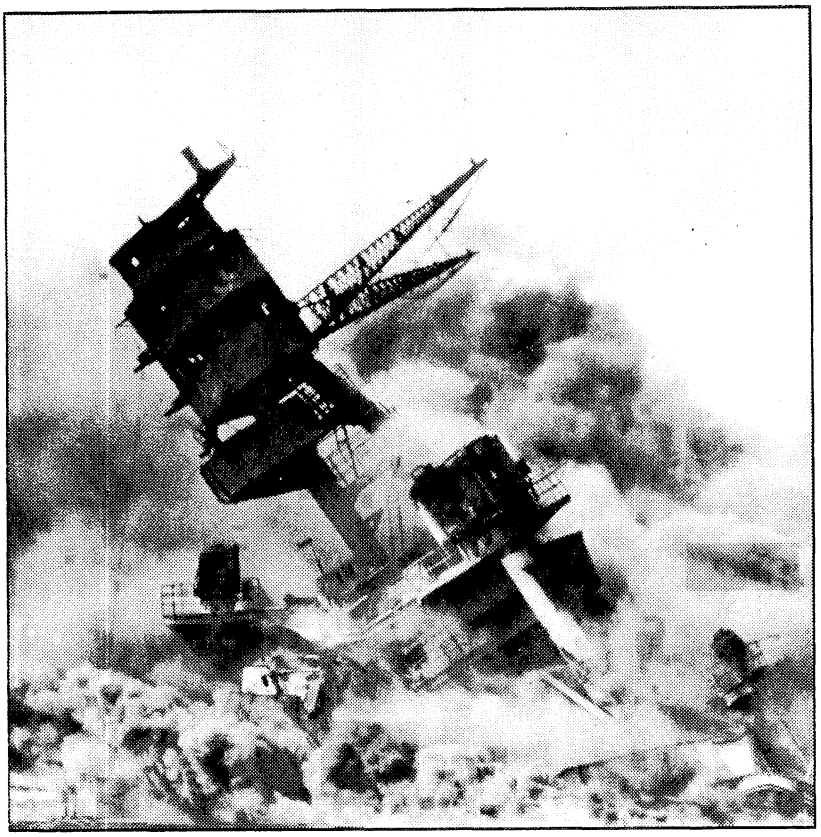

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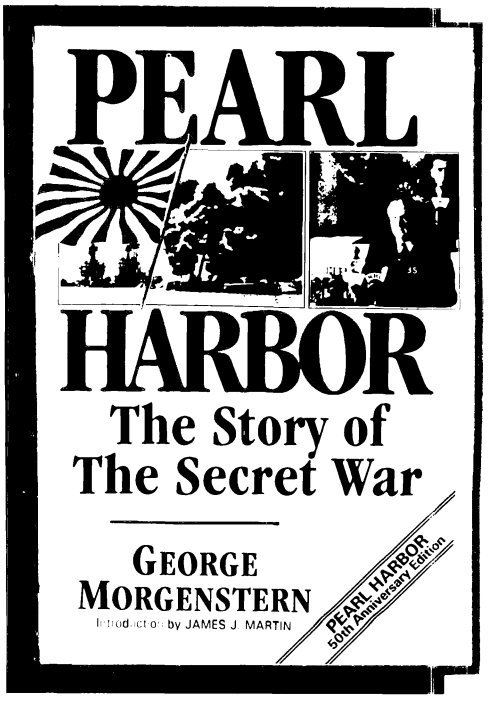

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IN THIS ISSUE

Belgium and its Jews During the War 2
Mark Weber

Bagnold's Bluff: The Long Range Desert Patrols 6
Trevor J. Constable

IHR Internet Web Site 23

For a Balanced History of the American Indian 24
Zoltán Bruckner

Free Speech Victory in Spanish 'Holocaust Denial' Case 29

Secrets of the Soviet Disease Warfare Program 32

General Montgomery's 'Racist Masterplan' 33

How Dangerous is the Swastika? 34

Auschwitz in History 36
Ernst Nolte

The Union: Worth a War? 37
Doug Bandow

Letters 39

On the Cover: Tenochtitlán, capital of Montezuma's Aztec empire.

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Belgium and its Jews During the War

MARK WEBER

A look at how German authorities treated Jews in Belgium during the years of wartime occupation is revealing because it is difficult to reconcile their policies with a German program systematically to exterminate Europe's Jews.

Belgium was quickly overrun by German military forces in May 1940, and after 18 days the country surrendered. Although the cabinet fled to London, where it established a pro-Allied government-in-exile, the country's King, Léopold III, as well as the head of government and the commander of the Belgian army, remained with their people. During the following four years of occupation, German authority was exercised through a military governor, General Alexander von Falkenhausen, while the overall administration of the country was carried out by Belgium's chief ministry officials and the regular civil service.[1]

At the outbreak of the war, about 90,000 Jews were living in this small western European country of some nine million people. Most were not Belgian citizens, and many were recently-arrived refugees from Germany, Austria and Poland. About 80,000 of the country's Jews were concentrated in the two largest cities, Brussels, the capital, and Antwerp, a major seaport. About three-fourths of Belgium's Jews were self-employed, and the diamond trade of Antwerp was largely in Jewish hands.[2]

During the months following the German takeover, many thousands of Jews fled the country, or were deported to neighboring France, so that by late 1940 only 52,000-55,000 reportedly remained in Belgium.[3]

'Armed Resistance'

Jews played a prominent role in Belgium's anti-German underground. As one Jewish historian later noted with pride, Jews were among the first "to take an active part in the resistance movement and in all forms of sabotage." Eventually, "many hundreds" of Jews "took part in the armed resistance." In one spectacular case in April 1943, "in open battle between the Jewish partisans and the [German] Field Police, many Germans were killed while the partisans got away without loss." Within the overall anti-German underground movement, a special "Ninth Jewish Brigade" was established. "Several weeks before the liberation [September 1944], hundreds of Jewish volunteers answered the call of the Jewish resistance organizations and took part in the final, open battle against the occupying forces."[4]

Jacob Gutfreind commanded the country's first Jewish terrorist group, which was organized in late 1941. Its members set fire to factories, derailed trains, attacked garages, and murdered Germans, Belgians and Jewish "informers" who collaborated with the authorities. Gutfreind and his wife were eventually caught and deported to Auschwitz. They settled in Israel after the war.[5]

Germans weren't the only ones who were concerned that Jews might constitute a threat to security. Following the Allied liberation of the country, British military authorities in Belgium rounded up and interned as "enemy aliens" some 2,000 Jews (apparently of German citizenship).[6]

Deportations

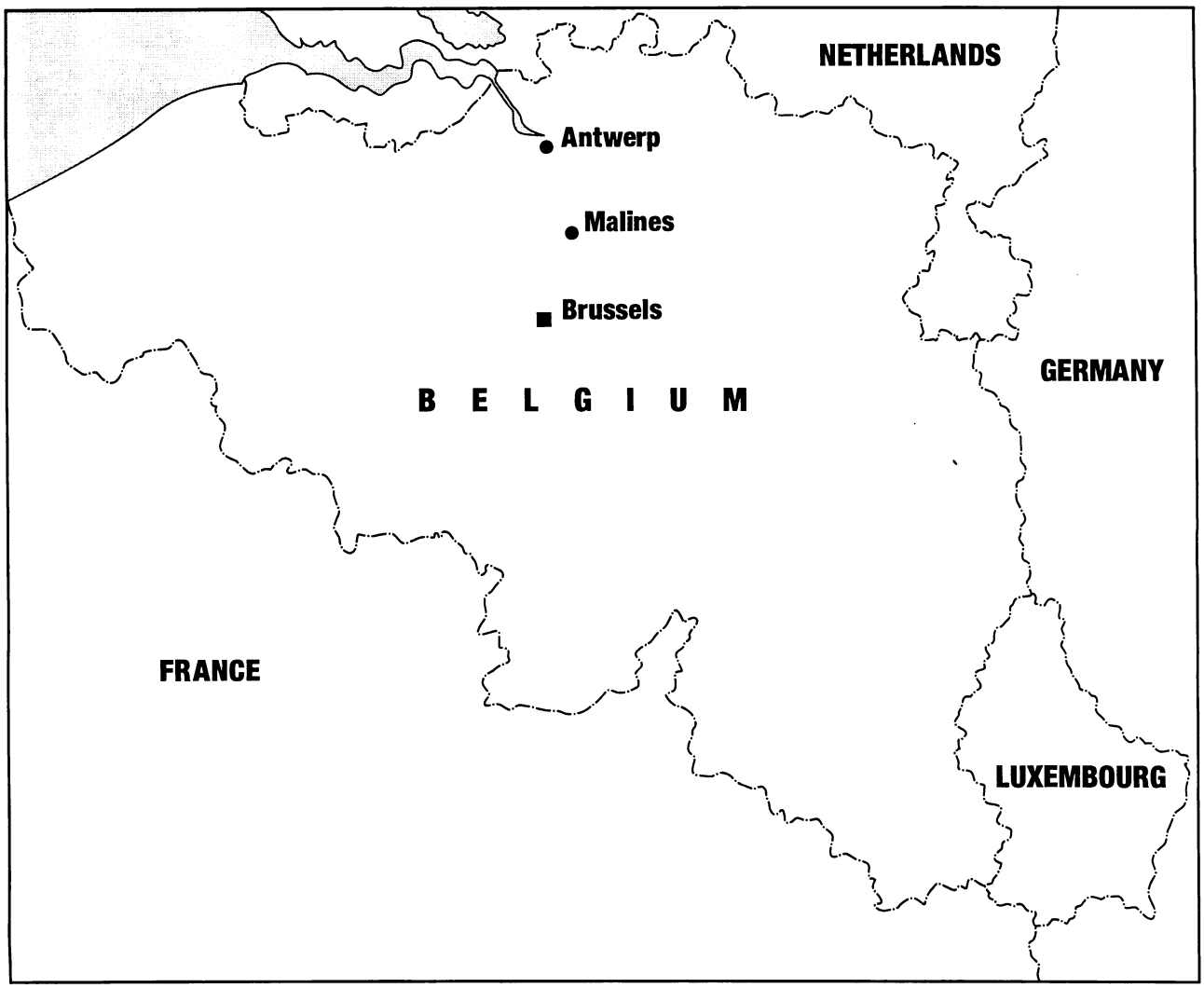
Beginning in August 1942 and continuing until July 1944, some 25,000 Jews were deported eastward from Belgium. Apparently most were transported to Auschwitz, although some were sent to the Lodz ghetto, the Theresienstadt ghetto-camp, the Bergen-Belsen camp, and elsewhere.[7]

In November 1942 the German Foreign Office representative in Brussels reported that some 15,000 Jews had been deported from Belgium to "the East," and that additional transports would be following. These deportees, he went on, were Jews of non-Belgian citizenship, mostly of Polish, Czech, German or Russian citizenship or origin, or stateless.[8]

According to some wartime reports, Jews were also deported from Belgium to the occupied Soviet territories.[9] In August 1942 Jews were reportedly taken by train from Belgium to a labor camp in southern Russia where they worked on building fortifications.[10] In October 1942 the leading Jewish community newspaper of neutral Switzerland reported that rail transports of Jews from Belgium and other western European countries had recently arrived in Riga (Latvia) before being taken further.[11]

Such deportations seem inconsistent with a policy to exterminate all of Europe's Jews. If the goal was simply to kill them, why would the Germans have transported Jews from western Europe to territories far to the east of Auschwitz and other alleged "death camps"?

Remarkably, many Jews in Belgium were exempt from deportation. For one thing, categori-



cally exempted by the Germans from deportation from Belgium (as well as from France and the Netherlands) were Jews who were citizens of the United States, Britain and the British dominions, or the Latin American countries.[12]

More startling, the German military governor, von Falkenhausen, responded to a plea from Belgian Cardinal van Roey and the country's Queen-Mother, Elizabeth, by ordering Jews of Belgian citizenship exempt from deportation. The only exceptions were about 800 "delinquent" Belgian-citizen Jews who had refused to wear the obligatory Jewish star badge or had violated other regulations.[13]

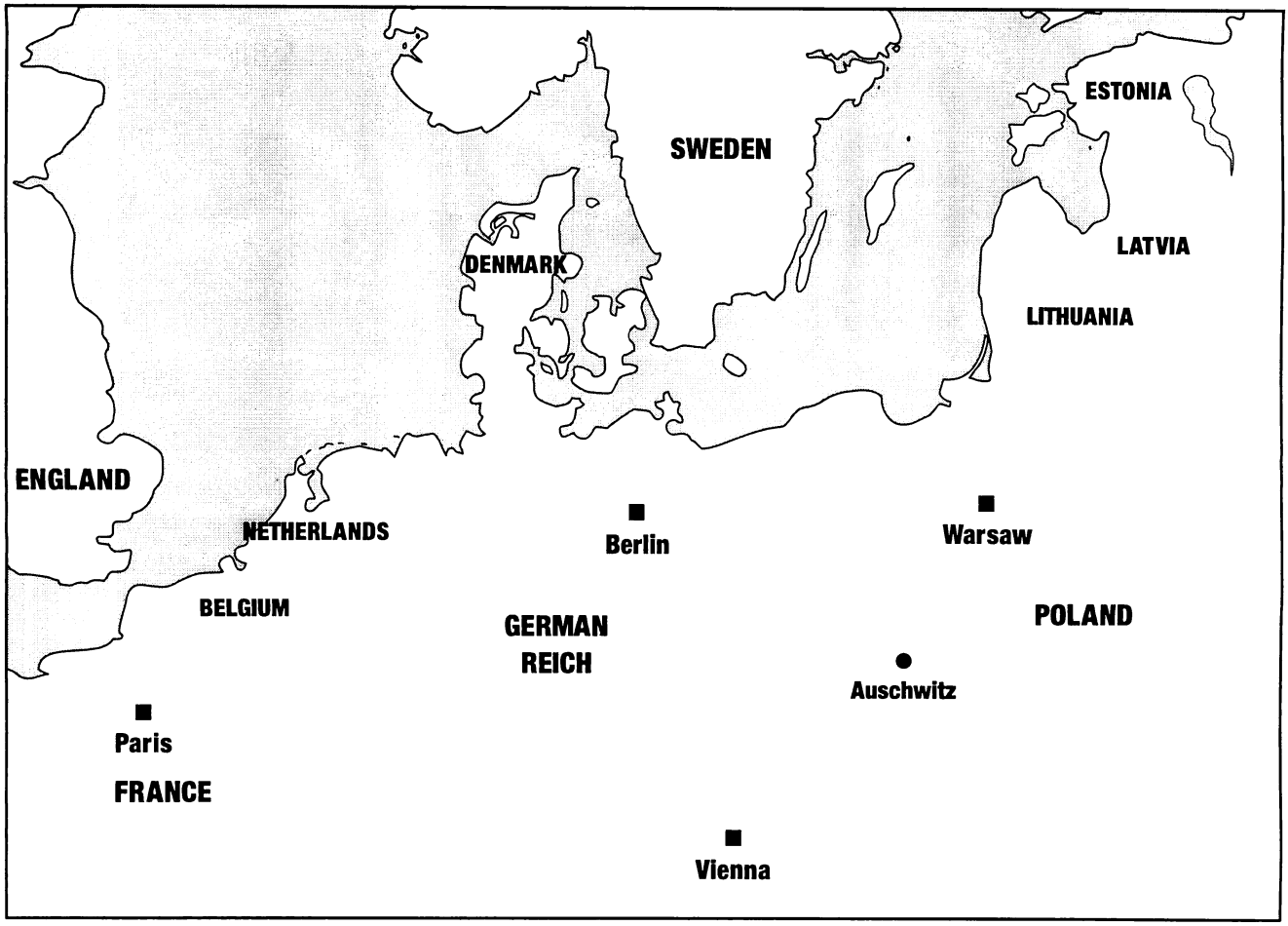
The Breendonck Internment Camp

A detailed work published after the war by the World Jewish Congress and other Jewish organizations, *The Black Book: The Nazi Crime Against the Jewish People*, cited testimony evidence to charge that the German authorities had killed 200 persons each month in the Breendonck internment camp in Belgium, which supposedly was "more horrible than Dachau and Buchenwald were before the war." Prisoners there were reportedly also killed in a special gassing cell.[14] Today Breendonck is barely mentioned in the Holocaust literature, and no reputable historian credits the Breendonck gassing story,

Widely Varying Death Figures

As in the case of other countries, supposedly authoritative estimates of Jewish wartime deaths for Belgium vary greatly. According to the US government's widely publicized 1944 War Refugee Board (WRB) Report, which was submitted as an important American prosecution exhibit at the main Nuremberg trial, "approximately 50,000" Jews deported from Belgium were killed in Auschwitz-Birkenau gas chambers between April 1942 and April 1944.[15]

More or less consistent with this, the so-called "Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry" announced in 1946 that, out of a total of 5.7 million European



Jews who perished during the war years, 57,000 were Jews from Belgium. Lucy Dawidowicz estimated that 40,000 Belgian Jews lost their lives during the war, while another Jewish Holocaust historian, Gerald Fleming, estimated 26,000.[16]

A 1977 report by a German government agency affiliated with the International Committee of the Red Cross reported that between August 4, 1942, and July 31, 1944, a total of 25,557 Jews (including 497 Gypsies) were deported from Belgium, of whom 1,271 returned after the war.[17] Raul Hilberg, a prominent Holocaust historian, concluded in his 1985 study that 24,000 Belgian Jews lost their lives during the war years, and that 40,000 Jews in Belgium survived the war.[18]

Historians Gerald Reitlinger and Yehuda Bauer — apparently referring to German and Belgian records — similarly reported that a total of 25,437 Jews were deported from Belgium, of whom 1,276 returned after the war. "More than half of the Jewish population of Belgium survived the war," noted Bauer, and Reitlinger remarked that Belgium "lost virtually none" of its "native Jewish population."[19]

Historians Hilberg, Bauer and Reitlinger thus agree that far more Belgian Jews survived than perished, and that the total number of Belgian Jews who perished (of all causes) during the war years is less than half the number of Belgian Jews supposedly gassed at Auschwitz-Birkenau, according to the US government's authoritative WRB Report.

Notes

1. M. Baudot, et al, ed., *The Historical Encyclopedia of World War II* (New York: Facts on File, 1989), pp. 53-54; I. C. B. Dear, genl. ed., *The Oxford Companion to World War II* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), pp. 118-122; Jacob Robinson, *And the Crooked Shall Be Made Straight* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 238-240, 354.
2. Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York: Bantam, pb. ed., 1976), pp. 491-494; Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 3 vols., 1985), pp. 600-602; Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution: The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe* (London: Sphere Books, 2nd edition, pb., 1971), pp. 367, 368 (In the 1st US edition, New York: Beechhurst Press, 1953, these are pages 342-345); Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (New York: F. Watts, 1982), pp. 238-240; Eric J. Epstein & P. Rosen, *Dictionary of the*

Holocaust (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1997), pp. 26-27; Michael R. Marrus, Robert O. Paxton, "The Nazis and the Jews in Occupied Western Europe, 1940-1944," *The Journal of Modern History*, Dec. 1982 (Vol. 54, No. 4; Univ. of Chicago Press), pp. 706-707.

3. Peter Longerich, ed., *Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden: Eine umfassende Dokumentation des Holocaust, 1941-1945* (Munich and Zurich: Piper, 1990), p. 265; Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (1985), p. 601 (doc. NG-5219).
4. Abusz Werber, "Jewish Resistance in Belgium," *Yad Vashem Bulletin* (Jerusalem), No. 22, May 1968, pp. 60-61; More than a thousand Jews in Belgium "fought with the Belgian partisans," reports Jewish historian Martin Gilbert in his *Atlas of the Holocaust* (New York: William Morrow, 1993), p. 110.
5. J. Gutfreind, "The Jewish Resistance Movement in Belgium," in: Yuri Suhl, ed., *They Fought Back: The Story of Jewish Resistance in Nazi Europe* (New York: Crown, 1967, and, Schocken, 1975), pp. 304, 308. See also p. 182, which mentions another Jewish member of the anti-German Belgian underground, Giza Weisblum, who was arrested in 1943 and deported to Auschwitz. Weisblum moved to Israel after the war.
6. Raul Hilberg, *Destruction* (1985), p. 1059.
7. Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews* (Bantam, pb. ed., 1976), p. 494; R. Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (1985), pp. 606-608; G. Reitlinger, The Final Solution (London: Sphere, 1971), pp. 368, 369; Martin Gilbert, *Atlas of the Holocaust* (New York: William Morrow, 1993), p. 110 (and map 134).
8. Nuremberg documents NG-5209 (or NG-022) and NG-5219. P. Longerich, ed., *Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden* (Piper, 1990), pp. 263, 265.
9. For example, in June 1943 the London-based Belgian government-in-exile reported (inaccurately) that "the Germans had removed nearly all 52,000 Belgian Jews to concentration camps in Germany, Poland and occupied Russia." Source: *The New York Times*, June 15, 1943, p. 8. Quoted in: Arthur Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* (IHR, 1997), p. 82; *American Jewish Year Book*, 5705, Vol. 46, Copyright 1944 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America), p. 220.
10. "Deportation and Death: Eyewitness Testimony," *Congress Weekly* (New York: Am. Jewish Congress), Dec. 4, 1942, pp. 6-7. The source given for this "eyewitness" report is "Geneva, October 8, 1942." Possibly it was provided by the Geneva office of the World Jewish Congress. This "testimony" was supposedly provided by a Polish Jew who was arrested in Brussels, and was then included in the transport from Belgium to Russia. After working in Russia, he supposedly hid in a train that went to Paris.
11. *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz*, No. 42, Oct. 16, 1942, pp. 10-11.
12. Jacob Robinson, *And the Crooked Shall be Made Straight* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 22-23, 287, n. 59. (NG-183)
13. L. S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews* (Bantam, 1976), p. 494; G. Reitlinger, *The Final Solution* (London: 1971), pp. 367, 369, 538 (In the 1st US edition, New York: 1953, these are pages 342-345, 494); Nuremberg doc. NG-5219 (cited above); Norman Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, Vol. 2 (New York: Norton, 1974), pp. 187-188.
14. Jewish Black Book Committee (World Jewish Congress, etc.), *The Black Book: The Nazi Crime Against the Jewish People* (New York: 1946), p. 270. A facsimile of this page is in: Carlos W. Porter, ed., *Made in Russia: The Holocaust* (England: HRP, 1988), p. 384;

    During the war the *American Jewish Year Book* told readers that Jewish "children were reported gassed at Brasschaet, north of Antwerp." *American Jewish Year Book*, 5705, Vol. 46, Copyright 1944 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America), p. 220.
15. Nov. 1944 WRB report. Nuremberg document 022-L (USA-294). *Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal* (Nuremberg: IMT, 1947-1949 ["blue series"]), vol. 37, p. 433. (A facsimile of this page also appears in Arthur Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, p. 207.) See also IMT "blue series" vol. 3, p. 568.
16. Nora Levin, *The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry 1933-1945* (New York: Crowell, 1968), p. 715; L. S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews* (Bantam, 1976), p. 544; Gerald Fleming, *Hitler and the Final Solution* (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif., 1984), p. 193.
17. A. de Cocatrix, *Die Zahl der Nationalsozialistischen Verfolgung* (Arolsen: International Tracing Service, April 1977).
18. R. Hilberg, *Destruction* (1985), pp. 608, 1220, 1048.
19. G. Reitlinger, *The Final Solution* (London: Sphere, 1971), pp. 367, 369, 538; Yehuda Bauer, A *History of the Holocaust* (New York: 1982), p. 240; Similarly, Martin Gilbert contended that a total of 25,631 Jews were deported from Belgium during the war years, of whom 24,387 were "murdered," and that 1,244 of the deportees survived. Overall, he added, 40,000 of Belgium's Jews survived the war years. See: M. Gilbert, *Atlas of the Holocaust* (William Morrow, 1993), pp. 110, 242 (map 315), 244 (map 316).

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Clash of Forces in North Africa

Bagnold's Bluff

The Little-Known Figure Behind Britain's Daring Long Range Desert Patrols

TREVOR J. CONSTABLE

Specialist military units of the commando type enjoyed wide vogue during the Second World War, and what little military glamor shone through the conflict was confined almost exclusively to these private armies. They were the stuff of which legends are made. Bold leaders harassing armies with mosquito forces naturally became headline heroes in a war of otherwise inhuman mass effects. Ord Wingate and his Chindits in Burma; Evans Carlson and his Marine Raiders in the Pacific; Mountbatten's commandos; "Phantom Major" David Stirling and his Special Air Services force in North Africa; and on the other side the unforgettable Otto Skorzeny. The list of famous names is lengthy, and even today they evoke memories of high adventure and piracy. Missing from among them is the brilliant progenitor of all these private armies of modern times, the soldier-scientist who conceived and built the first and most successful of them all — Ralph Bagnold.

This tough-minded yet visionary Englishman played a decisive part in bringing the Allies through the serious crisis precipitated by Italy's entry into the war. The loss of the entire Middle East was an imminent possibility. The dramatic, unexpected flanking diversion provided by Bagnold's long range patrols — operating across the mountainous, scorching dunes in the interior of Egypt and Libya — tipped the strategic balance against the Axis. Military units had never penetrated these vast, unmapped wastes before, and First World War patrols had gone no farther than their fringe, where they recoiled from the impassable barrier of the giant dunes. Formal military thinking on North African topography routinely took its cue from this experience. The dunes were deemed to be impassable. The success Bagnold achieved in the teeth of these and other orthodox military conceptions

Trevor J. Constable

opened many minds in the Allied high command, paving the way for numerous specialist units that followed.

The successful ones were built upon the foundation that Bagnold laid. He established the fundamentals of all small force success — planning, organization, the right equipment and communications, and a human element of exceptional quality. Adherence to these fundamentals could produce results out of all proportion to the size of the force, and with minimum casualties.

Today the ability of a small, highly-trained unit to penetrate to the heart of any country on earth has to be taken into account in protecting key leaders in the event of war. The Assassins of the twelfth century may have been the originators of this concept, but it was Ralph Bagnold who first showed in modern times what an élite and resolute small force could achieve in upsetting the strategy of armies. His achievement had its origin in a seemingly useless peacetime hobby that the English adventurer shared with a few friends. How he turned *this* hobby into a superior instrument of war, and was then hidden by the sheer bulk of the commando heroes who came later, is an example of historical caprice hardly rivalled in our time.

Trevor J. Constable, born in New Zealand in 1925, has an international reputation as an aviation historian. With Colonel Raymond F. Toliver, he has authored a number of successful works on fighter aviation and ace fighter pilots. He has lived in the United States since 1952. He now makes him home in southern California.

A professional soldier who entered the British Army as an engineer officer through the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, Ralph Bagnold served in the trenches in the First World War. Posted to Egypt in 1925 as a signals officer, he found himself among a group of kindred spirits sharing a combined officers" mess with the Royal Tank Corps. He began experimenting with the cross-country potentialities and endurance of the Model T Ford, taking these rugged early cars over rough ground and sand drifts where no car had previously ventured. While other officers spent their time at Gezira Sporting Club or enjoying the fleshpots of Cairo and Alexandria, Bagnold and his friends used their weekends and periods of local leave to make adventurous journeys in the desert. They probed eastwards to Sinai, Palestine and Jordan before made-up roads existed. Their leader by free acknowledgment, Bagnold's enterprise, ingenuity and intelligence were the driving force behind these pioneering expeditions.

Unshaven in their informal desert garb hundreds of miles from civilization, Bagnold and his friends might have been considered highly unconventional by those who were content with more mundane recreations. They were intelligent, educated men indulging a common passion for the desert. Their numbers regularly included two young officers of the Royal Tank Corps, Guy Prendergast and Rupert Harding-Newman. Both were expert drivers, and Prendergast was also an enthusiastic airman at a time when flying was still a rare skill. Later they were destined to turn their journeys with Bagnold to good military account, although at the time the far-ranging journeys were merely a hobby.

Growing experience and confidence in his own logistics and specially-designed equipment turned Bagnold's mind inevitably westwards to the frightening immensity of the Libyan Desert — the most arid region on earth. Roughly the size and shape of the whole Indian peninsula, its strange, wind-sculptured wastes, as rainless and dead as the moon, were largely unmapped and untrodden by man or beast since prehistoric times. Scorching, vast and silent, it presented an irresistible challenge. Intrigued by the prospect of conquering this desert of deserts, the English explorer began planning a new adventure.

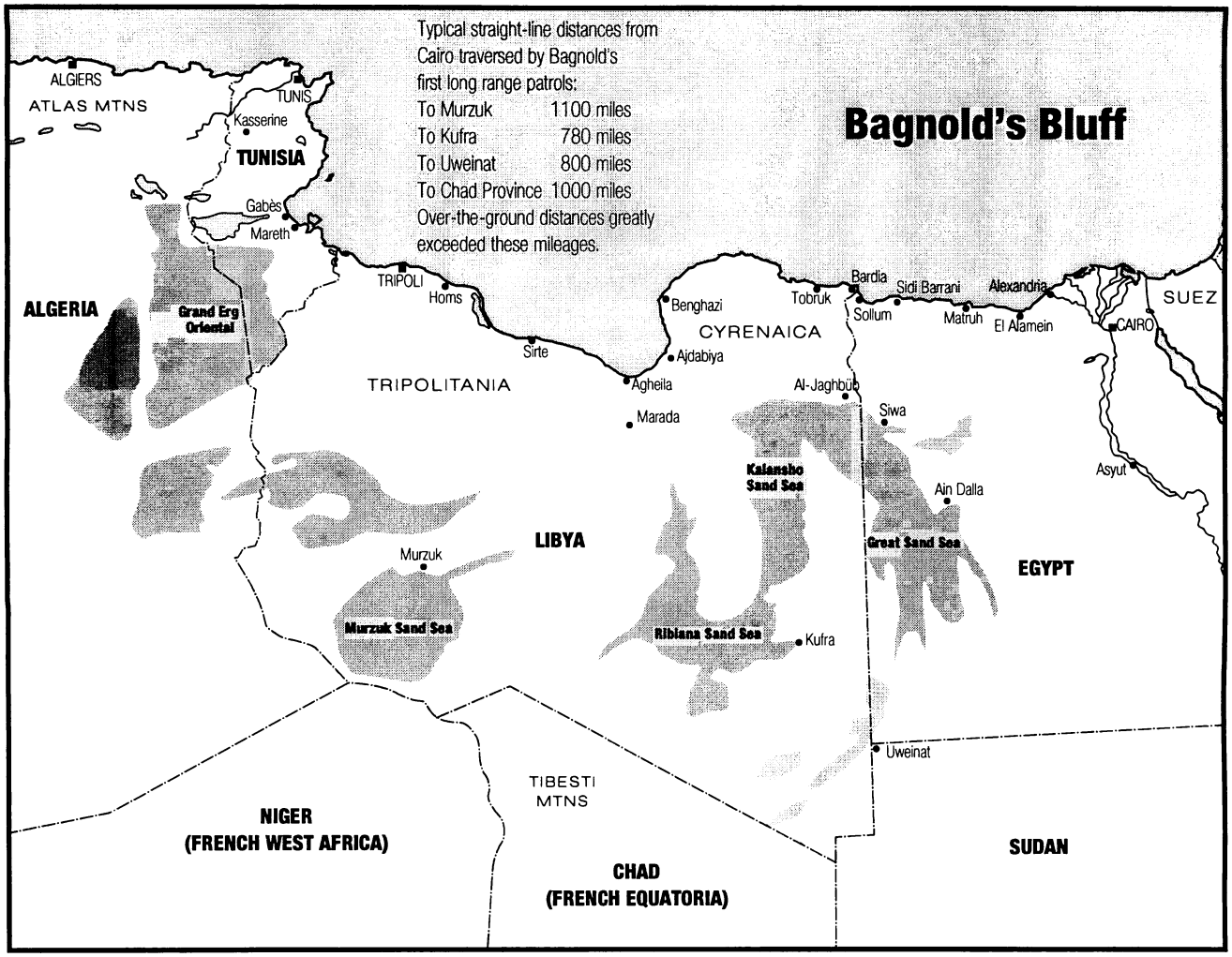
Could a small, self-financed party of six men, in three of the new Model A Ford cars penetrate the Libyan Desert as far or perhaps even farther than previous expeditions? The most recent exploration effort had been made by the millionaire Prince Kemal el Din, with a fleet of caterpillar trucks supported by supply trains of camels. Three Model A Fords seemed a puny expedition by comparison, but Bagnold felt that perhaps sheer size and resources were not the key to success. Might not a small party

Ralph Bagnold in a rare photograph taken by his friend Bill Kennedy Shaw during a 1932 exploration trip in Libya's Great Sand Sea. During his private pioneering expeditions in the 1930s he learned the techniques of driving motor vehicles over the immense dunes of northern Africa, and of surviving in the pitiless desert — experience that proved invaluable in organizing desert patrols in 1940. With General Wavell's backing, Bagnold's daring patrols bluffed Italy's Marshal Graziani into halting his drive to the Suez Canal. Wartime security suppressed the story of Bagnold's history-changing achievement.

even succeed in crossing the enormous dune field of the Great Sand Sea? The width of that barrier was unknown, but it separated Egypt and Libya for five hundred miles from north to south. Prince Kemal el Din had judged the Great Sand Sea to be utterly impassable.

Despite this first-hand judgment by a contemporary explorer, Bagnold resolved in 1930 to try to conquer the dune barrier. His party included two British officials on leave from the Sudan civil service: Douglas Newbold, permanent head of the government, and Bill Kennedy Shaw, archaeologist and botanist. Both were Arabic scholars and experienced camel travellers, and both were burning with enthusiasm to explore the mysteries of the Libyan desert, legends of which abounded in ancient Egyptian records and in Arabic literature.

Bagnold's planning and intuitive pathfinding



succeeded. The bold little group discovered a single practicable route for light cars over range upon range of towering sand dunes. In their Model A Fords they covered some four thousand miles of unknown country before returning to Cairo in triumph. The Sand Sea route was retraced and mapped in detail shortly afterwards by Patrick Clayton, a tough, restless Irishman and expert cartographer employed by the Egyptian Desert Survey. Clayton's grey hairs belied his drive, versatility and skill, qualities which earned him Bagnold's respect and friendship.

After this successful penetration of Inner Libya, the Royal Geographical Society supported additional and still longer journeys. The primary exploration of the region was under way, but Bagnold's interest had meanwhile been seized by the sands in a manner quite different from that of a conventional explorer. Fascinated by the extraordinary symmetry and geometrical regularity of the great dunes, he found that little was known to scientists about the formation and movement of these vast natural barriers. Retiring from the army, Bagnold turned scientist and embarked on laboratory research into sand movement. He wrote a treatise entitled "The Physics of Blown Sand," which earned him election to the élite Royal Society of London — an almost unique distinction for a service officer with no academic qualifications beyond a Cambridge BA. He occupied himself with his scientific work in communications, hydraulics and fields connected with sand such as beach formation, until the outbreak of war in September 1939.

Major Bagnold was immediately recalled to the army. Ignoring his unique talents and specialized experience, the British Army bundled him aboard a troopship bound for Kenya — a country of which he knew nothing. The prospect of his years of desert experience going to waste was discouraging, but he could do no more than obey orders.

Fate intervened in the form of a mid-Mediterranean collision involving his troop ship. The vessel was so badly damaged that its passengers were disembarked at Port Said, where they would be required to wait at least a week for another ship, Seizing the chance to visit his many friends in the

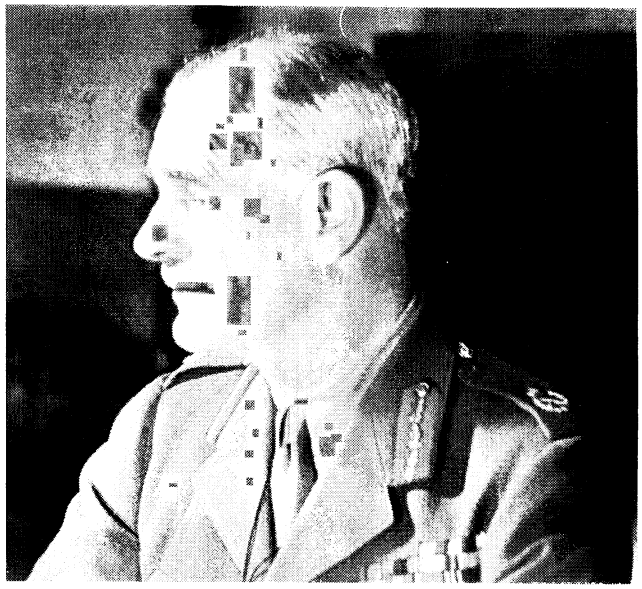
capital, Bagnold caught the first train to Cairo. A sharp-eyed reporter for the *Egyptian Gazette* spotted the greying major in Shepheard's Hotel, the famous social mecca of British Army officers in those days. The reporter knew all about Bagnold's prewar desert journeys and began putting two and two together. In his column "Day In, Day Out" he briefly reviewed Bagnold's past achievements for his readers, and ended his column with the following observation:

> Major Bagnold's presence in Egypt at this time seems a reassuring indication that one of the cardinal errors of 1914-18 is not to be repeated. During that war, if a man had made a name for himself as an explorer of Egyptian deserts, he would almost certainly have been sent to Jamaica to report on the possibilities of increasing rum production, or else have been employed digging tunnels under the Messines Ridge. Nowadays, of course, everything is done much better.

Square peg Bagnold was, "of course," on his way to a round hole in Kenya, true to the British Army tradition that the newspaperman had criticized. The course of the North African war was nevertheless to turn on what the reporter had written about Bagnold in the *Egyptian Gazette*. General Sir Archibald Wavell read the thumbnail sketch of Bagnold's desert career in "Day In, Day Out," and thus learned of the explorer's presence in Egypt.

Although Wavell had no official status in the Middle East at that time, he was working behind the scenes on preparations for the inevitable expansion of the war in that theatre. The so-called "Phony War" was in progress in Europe after Germany's conquest of Poland. The Battle of France still lay in the future. Italy was not yet in the war, and the open appointment of an eminent soldier like Wavell to command the Middle East might have been seized on by Mussolini as a provocation. General Wavell had therefore been sent out from England *sub rosa*, to plan for Italy's entry into the war, or for a German thrust through the Balkans, or for both together. As if to emphasize his unofficial status, Wavell occupied a small office in the attic of the bulky HQ building of British Troops Egypt (BTE), the peacetime garrison force commanded by General Sir Henry Maitland "Jumbo" Wilson. Bagnold was completely unaware of all these arrangements when he began visiting old army friends.

The major's first call was at the office in the same building of his old friend and contemporary, Colonel Micky Miller, then chief signal officer BTE. Miller's face lit up as Bagnold appeared. "Just the man," he said. "Wavell wants to see you. "Wavell?" said Bagnold, "what's he doing here? I thought Jumbo Wilson was in command." Miller put his fingers to his lips in a gesture of silence. "Hush," he said, "Wavell isn't supposed to be here. Jumbo's our boss. Wavell has no authority to interfere. But he knows everything that goes on and remembers everything and everybody. He's planning something big and he's collecting people — people who *know* things. You'll certainly be transferred here, Ralph. Come on. I'll take you upstairs."



Archibald Wavell (1883-1950), seen here as Commander-in-Chief Middle East. In the summer of 1940 he faced an Italian army in North Africa of more than 200,000 men that was poised to invade Egypt and seize the Suez Canal. Although he commanded much weaker forces, Wavell understood the power of strategic deception. Desert explorer Ralph Bagnold convinced him to pull an immense bluff, using long range patrols to attack remote Italian bases on the far southern flank. Italian commander Graziani "bought" the bluff and stalled his drive for the vital Canal. In the precious weeks of time won by Bagnold, Wavell built up his forces enough to smash the Italian army in eastern Libya, December 1940-February 1941.

As they climbed up to the attic Bagnold's puzzlement grew at the modest quarters assigned to such a senior general. From Micky Miller came a quick aside as they reached Wavell's office: "He's got a glass eye, you know. So be careful to look at the good one."

The interview was brief. The one very bright eye, set in a wrinkled, weather-beaten face, looked Bagnold over. The general spoke quietly.

"Good morning Bagnold. I know about you. Been

One of Bagnold's early Long Range Patrols is inspected in Cairo in 1940 before departure on operations across the desert and dunes of eastern Libya. At first made up largely of New Zealand volunteers, the patrols' main tasks were to reconnoiter far west of the main fighting lines to report on enemy movements and dispositions. Later known as the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG), and greatly expanded, the patrols were active throughout the North African war. The LRDG was organized in a dozen truck-borne patrols, with ten trucks to a patrol and some six men per truck. Its tactics and administration were fluid. More than 50 of its members were decorated for gallantry, and only 16 were killed. "Considering its size," concluded *The Historical Encyclopedia of World War II* (1989), "it [the LRDG] exercised a wholly disproportionate influence on the desert war."

posted to Kenya. Know anything about that country?"

"No sir."

"Be more useful here wouldn't you?"

"Yes sir."

"Right. That's all for now."

As Bagnold walked out he pondered on the inscrutability of that remarkable face. Was it grim, or smiling at the prospect of some half-formed plan? Even in those brief moments there was an impression of quiet power about Wavell.

Two days later a cable from London transferred Bagnold to Egypt, and was followed by a local posting to a signal unit of Major General Hobart's Armored Division at Matruh, on Egypt's Mediterranean coast. He was back in the desert again. Cancellation of his Kenyan assignment was like a redemption, but in later years he would marvel at the delicate pinions of maritime collision and newspaperman's acumen on which his destiny had turned.

Within a few weeks, his geographically broader outlook grasped the alarming weaknesses of the defense situation should the huge Italian armies in Libya and Ethiopia attack the Nile states of Egypt and the Sudan. The one British armored division in North Africa, newly formed and crucially short of transport, would be put to its limit to defend the 60 mile-wide "Western Desert" — the maneuverable coastal strip between the Mediterranean and the northern edge of the great sands. A major Italian thrust to seize the Nile Delta was certain to come from Italian Libya eastwards in the event of hostilities. Five hundred miles to the south, the Italians were known to maintain a garrison at 'Uweinat on the Sudan border, well beyond the southern limit of the Sand Sea. Bagnold knew this country well. From 'Uweinat it was only 500 miles eastward to the Nile over a sand sheet of billiard-table smoothness. A strong mobile column could cover this distance in two easy days, seize the Aswan Dam, isolate the Sudan and hold Egypt to ransom. Bagnold knew that this situation would be readily apparent to at least one man on the Italian side.

The major's mind turned to his Italian counterpart, Colonel Lorenzini, a man of vision, leadership and daring. Bagnold had met Lorenzini in the remote desert eight years previously and had been deeply impressed by his quality. Lorenzini would instantly grasp the situation in the same way as Bagnold, with all its potential for conquest. If the Italian high command had kept Lorenzini in Libya, surely they would be listening to him now. Complicating the situation and heightening its menace was the lack of aircraft for reconnaissance. The British had no machines available of sufficient range to fly south and investigate Italian intentions.

Summarizing the situation on paper, the analytical Bagnold outlined a suitable establishment for such patrols. He added a note suggesting that since no suitable army vehicles existed, it was high time

to begin experimenting on a modest scale with half a dozen selected modern commercial vehicles. He made three copies of his proposal, and gave the original to Major General Percy Hobart to read. The hawk-faced "Hobo," leading practical pioneer of modern armored warfare, who, as we have seen [in the Jan.-Feb. 1999 *Journal*], had risked his career in the cause of strategic mobility, was in no doubt as to the validity of Bagnold's proposal: "I entirely agree," said Hobo, "and I'll send this on to Cairo. But I know what will happen. They will turn it down."

Hobart was right. General Wavell had not yet come out of his attic. The Cairo brass lived in the peacetime routine of an internal security force stationed in Egypt since 1870 — an atmosphere lethal to any innovations such as Bagnold was now proposing. The formal Cairo view was that the desperate lack of defense troops and equipment made it essential not to provoke Italy in any way. Mussolini had a quarter of a million troops in Libya and a quarter of a million more in the south. He was still sitting on the fence. Roving patrols like Bagnold's — even if they were feasible — might tip Mussolini into war. But this was only the formal view.

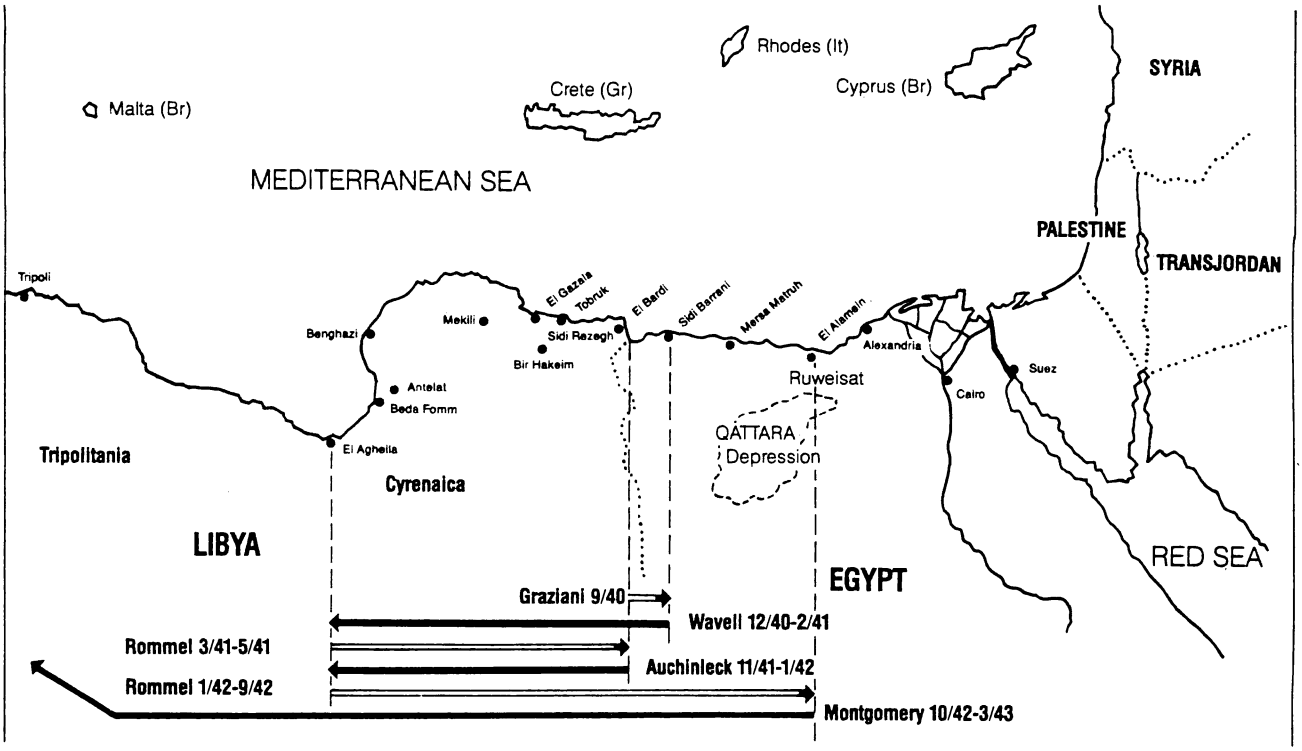
The real reason for the rejection of Bagnold's proposal lay in the ignorance of the Cairo brass about the desert on whose edge their own HQ was located. Fear was the inevitable concomitant of this ignorance. One senior staff officer warned Bagnold that if he took troops into the desert where there were no roads "you'll get lost." On the officer's wall hung a map of Egypt's western frontier that was dated 1916. Detail in this faded out with the words, "limit of sand dunes unknown." Comments on Bagnold's suggestion of taking patrols across the 150-mile wide Sand Sea ranged from "ridiculous" to "madness."

Physically a wiry man, without an ounce of spare flesh on him, Bagnold had the moral and mental fibre to match his physical resilience. He decided to try again. He showed the second copy of his patrol force proposal to General Hobart's successor, after "Hobo" had been kicked out of the army to become a Home Guard corporal. The new armored division commander also approved of the plan and recommended it to Cairo. Again it was rejected. There were mutterings among offended brass-hats about this second attempt, and the "bloody nerve" of that major out at Matruh.

Shortly afterwards Bagnold went to Turkey in civilian clothes as the signals member of a small reconnaissance mission, sent at the invitation of that nervous and neutral government. When he returned to Cairo he found the scene transformed. Wavell had come out of his attic. He was now Commander-in-Chief Middle East, a military overlord with responsibility stretching from the Burmese border to West Africa, and from the Balkans to South Africa. A new headquarters, GHQ Middle East, was being set up in a different and cleaner part of Cairo, and an all-new staff consisting largely of officers fresh out from England was being assembled. The atmosphere was refreshingly alive.

Bagnold was appointed an aide to General Barker, the new Signal-Officer-in-Chief. Involved in the urgent improvisation of communications for

Major-General Sir Bernard "Tiny" Freyberg, commander of the New Zealand Division in Egypt in 1940, was asked by Major Ralph Bagnold to provide personnel for his first Long Range Patrols. The mobility-minded commander agreed to lend some of his best men to assist Bagnold's bold undertaking. Freyberg's assent was repaid at the end of the North African war when he led his division in the famous "Left Hook" operation at Mareth that finished the Axis in North Africa. This "Left Hook" went through country marked "impassable" on military maps because a New Zealand Long Range patrol had found a route.



Back and forth across North Africa, 1940-1943.

Wavell's gigantic and complex command, Bagnold forgot the desert until June 1940 brought crisis. France collapsed. Italy declared war. Both the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Suez were closed to shipping, virtually isolating the Middle East from a Britain itself set upon by a fleet of U-boats and the Luftwaffe. The threat Bagnold had foreseen with Italian entry into the war was now a stark reality.

Marshal Graziani's 15 divisions — a quarter of a million fighting men — would soon start rolling eastwards along the coast road towards Egypt and the Suez Canal. The Duke of Aosta's similarly massive army in Ethiopia posed a similar threat, pincering in on the Sudan and Egypt from the south. Wavell's immediately available defense forces were outnumbered ten to one. Reinforcements were coming, but with the Mediterranean closed, their arrival and deployment might be delayed for months. There were no war reserves of weapons or equipment. The situation seemed desperate.

The hour was late and Bagnold acted. He dug out the last copy of his earlier patrol force proposal and persuaded the head of the Operations Staff to place it personally on the commander-in-chief's own table. Reaction was immediate. Within an hour, Bagnold was again alone with Wavell.

This time there was no oppressive attic office, lack of authority, or doubt about the crisis that was being confronted. The great man on whom so much now depended sat calm and relaxed in his chair, the one eye bright as before. His greeting set Bagnold at ease, for Wavell acted like a shy man welcoming a friend for a quiet chat. He indicated the rumpled paper lying on his desk. "Tell me about this, Bagnold. How would you get into Libya?" Bagnold walked over to a modern map of Western Egypt hanging on the wall, and his finger stabbed and then moved laterally. "Straight through the middle of the Sand Sea, sir. It's the most unlikely place. The passage is here, due west of Ain Dalla. I've been along it, and I'm sure it will go all right, sir. And the going is good on the other side, what Clayton saw of it."

The C.-in-C.'s weatherbeaten face was impassive. "What would you do on the other side?" he asked. "We would go far enough west to cross both the southerly routes to Kufra Oasis and 'Uweinat. By reading the tracks, we could tell what recent traffic had been along them — the direction of travel and type of vehicle."

Wavell's expression remained unchanged. "What are the risks?" "Two, sir. First the weather. No Europeans have been into the sands in summer. If a south wind gets up, it'll be pretty hot. How hot no one knows. Second, this map of yours, sir. You see the passage across the Sand Sea is printed on it, and it's been on sale in Cairo for years."

Wavell gave a comprehending nod. "You mean they might be waiting for you at Clayton's cairn on the other side?" "Yes, sir. But it's a bleak place for

Italians to live at — no water, no life, no shelter and far from anywhere. It's a reasonable risk to assume they won't be there." "What about *your* wheel tracks, Bagnold? They last for years." "Over gravel country, yes sir, but its very difficult to follow wheel tracks from the air. The aircraft goes too fast. If you fly low enough to see the tracks, they suddenly jink sideways under the fuselage and are lost. Our tracks over the dunes, of course, would disappear with the first bit of wind."

The C.-in-C. leaned forward a little in his chair, still inscrutable, but obviously interested. "And if you find there has been no activity along the southerly routes, what then Bagnold?" "How about some piracy on the high desert?"

Wavell's face changed sharply. For an instant Bagnold feared he had gone too far. He had been too flippant with the C.-in-C. But the wrinkled face had creased now into a broad grin, the eye was very bright indeed and the whole head could have belonged to a pirate captain.

"Can you be ready in six weeks?"

"Yes sir."

"Any questions?"

"Volunteers and equipment, sir."

"Volunteers are a job for British Troops Egypt. I'll see that General Wilson gives you every help. Equipment? Hmmm, yes. You'll meet opposition."

Wavell reached out and pressed a button. Expecting a clerk or orderly to enter, Bagnold was astonished when the bell was answered immediately by a lieutenant-general. He was Sir Arthur Smith, Wavell's chief of staff. "Arthur," said Wavell. "Bagnold seeks a talisman. Get this typed out for me to sign, now." The C.-in-C. then dictated the most amazing order that Bagnold had heard in his military career: "Most Secret. To all Heads of Branches and Directorates. I wish any demand made personally by Major Bagnold to be met urgently and without question."

Wavell turned now to Bagnold. "Not a word of this must get out. There are some sixty thousand enemy subjects of all classes loose in Egypt. Get a good cover story from my DMI [Director of Military Intelligence]. When you're ready to start, write out your own operation orders and bring them direct to me."

This was absolute *carte blanche* — regardless of desperate equipment shortages.

Leaving the C.-in-C.'s office still hardly believing his ears, Bagnold pondered the sudden reaction and quick decision at the suggestion of piracy. Why had that word precipitated action? He reviewed what he knew of Wavell in search of an answer. A brilliant, mobility-minded strategist, Wavell was a student of foreign armies and the mentality of their leaders. He was also a poet and author. A member of

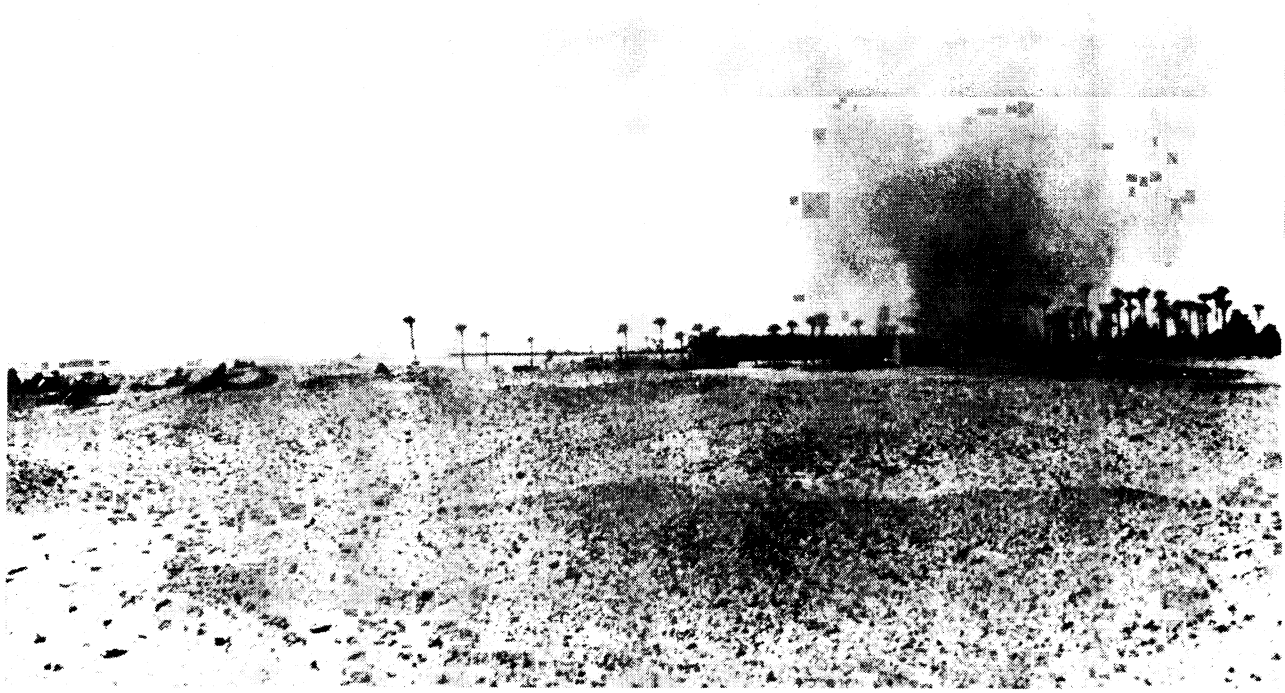
Erwin Rommel, legendary commander of the German Afrika Korps, repeatedly scored victories against larger British forces. Of the Long Range Desert Group patrols, the "Desert Fox" once remarked: "They caused us more damage than any other enemy unit of comparable strength."

Allenby's staff in the masterly Palestine campaign of the First World War, he was even now finishing a biography of the former chief. There was something else about Wavell — his grasp of strategic deception. He had made it a science. That must be it. The old man was planning an immense bluff to play for time!

The next six weeks were the most demanding and challenging of Bagnold's life. A new and untried type of armed force had to be created from nothing, trained for operations never previously attempted and introduced to a hard and novel way of life — all in a few short weeks. Success would depend on combining Wavell's talisman with a clear-cut plan and a knowledge of which button to push in the giant HQ machine. Bagnold threw all his energy into the task.

He would need the help of his prewar companions. Rupert Harding-Newman was the only one locally available in Cairo, serving as a liaison officer with the non-belligerent Egyptian Army. Guy Prendergast could not be brought from Britain. The archaeologist Bill Kennedy Shaw was curator of the Jerusalem Museum. Pat Clayton was on a surveying job in the wilds of Tanganyika. Shaw's release by the Palestine government was arranged, and Clayton was located by the Tanganyika government and bundled aboard a special aircraft for Cairo. Shaw and Clayton were both in Cairo within three days of Bagnold's request for their services, and both were put into uniform and commissioned as army captains immediately.

Bagnold and Harding-Newman meanwhile went shopping round the Cairo truck dealers. After trying out several types and makes, they settled on a one-and-a-half ton commercial Chevrolet with two-



Flank Attack on Murzuk. On January 11, 1941, eight days after General Wavell's advancing forces had taken Bardia (800 miles to the northeast), two of Bagnold's patrols attacked the Italian base and airfield at Murzuk, deep in southeastern Libya. Such actions on a remote southern flank, at a staggering distance from Cairo, unnerved the Italian commanders and caused them to doubt their own intelligence reports. By mid-February 1941, Wavell had trounced the greatly superior Italian forces, and occupied all of eastern Libya.

predictable according to a schedule varying with season and latitude. The No. 11. thus was less than ideal, but nothing else was available. When Bagnold's patrols were equipped, the last No. 11 radio set in the Middle East war reserve went to his third patrol. When he drew his machine guns, three more remained as the reserve for the entire Middle East. Clearly Wavell was dependent on the success of this bluff.

With his unique knowledge and enormous personal drive, Bagnold conquered each problem as it arose. His friend Bill Kennedy Shaw says of this period: "Bagnold's secret weapon was that he knew the desert and he knew the army — and all the quirks of both." The son of a colonel, his second home was the army and the desert his first love. This proved a winning combination, especially when the time came to turn from equipment to personnel. The imaginative major with unorthodox ideas knew enough about the army not to seek volunteers from among the regular troops. He was a realist. There was no time to unlearn such men of their routine ways. Resourceful, responsible men were needed, with the initiative that formal soldiering all too often extinguishes. His patrol personnel would have to absorb in weeks a mass of desert lore that Bagnold had acquired over two decades. They had to be fighting men, and yet skilled tradesmen, fitters, navigators and radio operators — as well as truck drivers and gunners. Keeping their small self-contained force operating for long periods in remote enemy territory would make heavy demands on their vital powers. They should be men accustomed to the outdoors.

General Sir Henry Maitland "Jumbo" Wilson, GOC [General Officer Commanding] of British Troops Egypt, suggested to Bagnold that he would find the men he wanted in the New Zealand Division. "The commander-in-chief has told me about this job of yours," said Wilson. "Sheep farmers should suit you, I think. I'll sound out General Freyberg. These people aren't very keen on serving with 'pommies,' as they call us, but his division has arrived without its weapons, which were sunk at sea." Wilson set up a meeting.

Armed with a detailed list of his requirements, Bagnold went to the New Zealand camp near Cairo. The bulky, battle-scarred "Tiny" Freyberg, with his unsurpassed fighting record in the First World War, was an almost-legendary hero to his own men, and he guarded their fortunes in turn with vigilance. His initial reaction was hostile. He was reluctant to lose his battalion commanders their best men, for this was in effect what Bagnold was asking. Fate, however, had made him the friend and confidant of Percy Hobart during the latter's bitter struggle for

strategic mobility. Hobart's ideas had rubbed off on Freyberg, who was also mobility-minded, and Bagnold's proposal was for mobility on a previously unimagined scale. Freyberg gave in. "All right," he said, "You can have them, but only temporarily mind you." As Bagnold left, Freyberg shot after him, "I shall expect them back."

Freyberg's circular to his division calling for "volunteers for an undisclosed but dangerous mission" produced more than a thousand applicants. Freyberg selected two officers from these, Captain Bruce Ballantine and Lieutenant Steele, and told them to pick their own team. When the little army arrived in Cairo, the modified trucks were just beginning to emerge from the workshops. The New Zealanders' initial suspicion of English officers increased when they were received by a major and two captains who seemed to them to be somewhat elderly, greying gentlemen. Qualms were quickly supplanted by enthusiasm as they learned what they were to do, saw the equipment they were to do it with, and how everything had been thought out in meticulous detail.

Under Bill Kennedy Shaw's instruction, the six navigators-to-be quickly learned how to use the sun compass on the move, to plot dead-reckoning courses and to fix their nightly position by the stars. Unexpected help came from one of the volunteers, Private Dick Croucher, who admitted to being an ex-Merchant Navy officer with a first mate's ticket. Like many other New Zealand soldiers he had concealed his qualifications for fear of having to spend the war on a busman's holiday.

Within the six weeks' time-limit set by Wavell, Major Bagnold was ready with three patrols. Dumps of supplies had been made at Ain Dalla near the Sand Sea crossing as part of their cross-country driving instruction. Another dump had been made at Siwa Oasis to the north of the Sand Sea, whence Pat Clayton had already reconnoitered a second route into inner Libya. With two trucks and five picked New Zealanders, he had penetrated southwards over the hundred-mile-wide north-western arm of the sands. Clayton also discovered and crossed another vast dune field, little realizing that twenty years later a rich oil field would be located beneath this barrier.

Wavell came personally to say goodbye to the patrols. The great general obviously loved adventurous enterprises, and his weathered face wore a subtle grin as he looked over his "mosquito columns" as he called them. "The old man looks as if he's dying to come with us himself," said a New Zealand trooper.

On September 5, 1940, the patrols slipped out of Cairo in secret. Lest the delicate sand structure of the passes over the dunes might not stand the disturbance of so many wheel tracks, two patrols commanded by Clayton and Steele drove to Siwa Oasis. They made a double journey south over Clayton's new intra-dune route to make a dump on the enemy side at Clayton's Cairn, the marker built by the surveyor ten years previously. The third patrol, commanded by Captain Mifford, with Bagnold, Intelligence Officer Bill Shaw and Adjutant Ballantine drove to Ain Dalla, to cross the Sand Sea directly from east to west. Graziani's huge Italian army was already advancing along the coast road to invade Egypt. Siwa Oasis and its dump would prob-

General Sir Archibald Wavell (right), Commander in Chief of British forces in the Middle East, talking with General "Dick" O'Connor, near Bardia, Libya, January 1941. Wavell's later military setbacks against Rommel, April-June 1941, were not his fault, but Churchill lost confidence in him. Wavell was nevertheless later promoted to Field Marshal, appointed viceroy of India, and created a viscount and then an earl.

ground route into Libya was still a secret from the enemy. While waiting for Clayton's two patrols from the north to rendezvous, Bagnold mounted a return journey to Dalla for supplies. The men's newly acquired skill showed in the scant seven hours they needed for the trip each way. When Clayton arrived, they had a substantial supply dump at Clayton's Cairn, and the complete mosquito army stood ready for action. Bagnold's bold concept had been vindicated in its most critical phase.

A military force could cross the Great Sand Sea, and in this brand-new fact lay considerable strategic possibilities. The inner desert no longer provided a defensive flank to an enemy attacking along the coast, but instead lay open before Bagnold's little force. The slender north-south lines of communication from the Mediterranean coast to Graziani's bases at Kufra and 'Uweinat in the far south could be harassed at will.

On September 13, 1940, Graziani's Libyan Army crossed the Egyptian frontier on its eastward advance towards Cairo and the Suez Canal. On that same day, Bagnold launched a two-pronged probe westwards into the heart of Libya. Mitford's patrol struck westwards across five degrees of longitude, burning the stocks of petrol found on the chain of landing grounds along the Kufra air route. They examined the motor tracks leading south, and kidnapped a small motor convoy complete with vehicles, supplies and official letters.

Pat Clayton meanwhile struck south-westwards, passing between Kufra and 'Uweinat mountain, right across southeast Libya to make contact with an astonished French outpost of Chad Province in French Equatorial Africa. Skirting the enemy garrison at 'Uweinat, the patrols rendezvoused in the desert and returned via Ain Dalla to Cairo. The prisoners and captured letters were handed over to Intelligence, and proved to be a mine of information for General Wavell. From Clayton's Cairn to Dalla, the patrols had travelled 1,300 miles completely self-contained. 150,000 truck miles had been covered without a single serious breakdown. This was only the beginning.

Other more aggressive raids quickly followed. Enemy desert outposts in the north were bombarded and destroyed, their garrisons routed or taken prisoner. Simultaneously the garrison at 'Uweinat was attacked 500 miles to the south. A collection of aircraft was destroyed on the ground, and a large dump of bombs and ammunition blown up. The attackers seemed to emerge from the fourth dimension to strike and vanish like lethal ghosts. They appeared, struck and disappeared at widely separated points seemingly within hours of each other. British radio monitors in Cairo and elsewhere intercepted enemy messages of alarm and cries for help pouring into Graziani's headquarters from all over eastern Libya.

All Graziani's plans for the conquest of Egypt were based on the assumption, backed by his intelligence reports, that he faced only weak forces. Quick victory and occupation of the Nile Delta were anticipated within a few weeks. Yet within a few days of his first battalions crossing the Egyptian frontier he began getting these disturbing reports of attack — from a direction he believed to be completely secure. The British seemed to be everywhere, operating at incredible distances from their base. These assaults gave the war situation a new dimension. These far-ranging forces might attack his vital rearward lines of communication. Graziani ceased believing his intelligence reports and their central theme of British weakness. In overwhelming strength, the massive Italian army halted its advance. Wavell's bluff was beginning to succeed.

Exploiting the situation to the full, Wavell ordered the number of patrols to be doubled. Twice as much piracy would spring from the additional patrols. From Long Range Patrols, the force was given a new designation, Long Range Desert Group (LRDG). The new distinguishing badge, showing a scarab riding a wheel, made its wearers among the most respected soldiers in the Middle East. Volunteers from the Brigade of Guards, Yeomanry regiments, the Rhodesian Army and the Indian Army joined the pioneer New Zealanders.

With the doubling of the patrols came a second carte blanche from Wavell: stir up trouble anywhere in Libya where the enemy can be harassed, attacked, shaken. Bagnold promptly obliged. He mounted an attack on Murzuk and its landing strip 1,100 miles as the crow flies from Cairo and 1,400 miles over the ground. Murzuk and back was far beyond the maximum range even of Bagnold's patrols, but supply dumping by the Free French in Chad under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel d'Ornano, provided the necessary extension of range. (Colonel d'Ornano's "price" for supply assistance was to be permitted to participate in the Murzuk raid. He was killed in action there.)

The brilliant Free French military commander Leclerc, stimulated by what he had heard of the capabilities of the British patrols, soon afterward resolved to capture the Italian stronghold at Kufra Oasis. Kufra was too tough a nut for Bagnold's small force to tackle alone. By a miracle of improvisation, Leclerc overhauled and equipped sufficient local transport to carry a battalion of native Chad troops and two 75-millimeter field guns, together with supplies for the double journey of a thousand miles. The attack on Kufra, backed by Bagnold's patrols, finally cleared the enemy from the whole interior of eastern Libya. The Murzuk and Kufra strikes were

timed to coincide with Wavell's counter offensive in the Western Desert. With the time Bagnold's force had won, Wavell had built up his strength, and by February 5, 1941, he had smashed the Italian Army.

From this time until the end of the North African war, at least one patrol of the Long Range Desert Group was always behind enemy lines. The unit doubled in size yet again. An LRDG "private air force" was added, in the form of two WACO monoplanes purchased from an Egyptian pasha, which aided communication with HQ and evacuation of the wounded. The LRDG guided and carried commando units far behind the front to carry out daring raids. With its unrivalled travelling and navigating abilities, the LRDG could place espionage agents at the very gates of Axis-held strong-points almost anywhere in North Africa.

LRDG patrols themselves razed airfields in daring nocturnal raids, destroying hundreds of aircraft on the ground between 1940 and 1943. Beating up Axis supply convoys and mining roads hundreds of miles behind the front was their steady war routine. The LRDG set up "road watch" patrols, often lying within earshot of the enemy and reporting every vehicle, weapon and tank that passed by. This precise intelligence of Rommel's supply position was one of Montgomery's vital tools in the ultimate defeat of the Desert Fox. When Ritter von Thoma, Rommel's deputy, was captured in the Battle of Alam Halfa just before El Alamein, the German general was shocked to learn that Monty knew more about the supply status of the Afrika Korps than he did. Most of this information reached Monty via LRDG road watch patrols.

The patrols continued to penetrate Axis territory pretty well as they chose. In the immensity of the desert their vehicles were rarely spotted. Bagnold's original concept, his detailed development of it, and his far-seeing organization had transformed the inner desert from a text-book "defensive flank" into a serious liability to the enemy.

In action against the Axis forces in North Africa from first to last, the LRDG proved to be the most original, boldly conceived and brilliantly organized "private army" of the war. The success of Bagnold's patrols helped break down official opposition to those commando-type formations, specialist units and "private armies" that fulfil novel and essential roles for which orthodox forces are neither trained nor equipped. The commando idea had been current for half a century or more, but its modern potentialities under special conditions had never been seriously considered. Those at the top seldom possess the special knowledge and experience to judge the probability of success. Luckily for the Allies, and perhaps for the world, Wavell was a commander willing to take risks. Without the stunning success Bagnold achieved, it is doubtful if some of the later private armies would have been authorized.

Unfortunately for Ralph Bagnold, the modernizer of this kind of auxiliary warfare, the *modus operandi* of his unique force had to be concealed in wartime from the enemy. Security blocked all details of its size and capabilities. Writing about the LRDG was initially forbidden and later heavily censored. For this reason, the LRDG was far less well-known in wartime than other auxiliary forces such as Carlson's Raiders, Wingate's Chindits, Stirling's Parashots or even German Colonel Otto Skorzeny's glider and parachute commandos. All these leaders became world famous.

Bagnold shared the anonymity of the LRDG in wartime. He left the unit in the summer of 1941 to become Inspector of Desert Troops,[1] and shortly afterwards deputy signal-officer-in-chief, with the rank of brigadier. He was decorated for his achievement in forming the LRDG with the Order of the British Empire — an exceedingly modest award for his unique contribution to the security of the Middle East and the defeat of the Axis. As he left the LRDG in 1941, his name ceased to be associated with it thereafter, except by those who knew the whole story and the true story. Later writers tended to assume that the colorful LRDG had come into existence as though grown on a bush. Bagnold's personal indifference to publicity helped hide him to history, and he was already half-forgotten when his LRDG brought off the classic climax to its career.

From his vantage point on the staff, Bagnold saw the LRDG trigger the end of the North African war, just as it had opened the Allied account in 1940. At Mareth in Tunisia, where Rommel made his final stand, a "left hook" was smashed home against the German forces that ended Axis hopes in Africa forever. This devastating knock-out blow was delivered through country marked "impassable" on military maps. Leading the pulverizing stroke was Major-General Sir Bernard "Tiny" Freyberg, who had given Bagnold the first troops for his patrols — back when Bagnold was known in Cairo for his "wild ideas." Freyberg had followed a route through "impassable" country found for him by, a patrol of the LRDG.

After the war, Brigadier Ralph Bagnold retired from the army for good, the green tranquillity of the Kentish countryside substituting for the golden wastes on which he found high adventure and fulfillment such as comes the way of few men. A busy and respected member of the British scientific community for decades, his fascination with the mysteries of natural physical processes was endless. He was a longtime consultant in the movement of sediments, beach formation and the like. In the words of Bill Kennedy Shaw: "Dry sand being difficult of

A Critical Response

For a Balanced History of the American Indian

ZOLTÁN BRUCKNER

As a *Journal* subscriber of ten years, a supporter of the Institute, and an attendee of the Tenth IHR Conference (1990), I share views similar to yours in most historical issues. But I must protest sharply against two articles about American Indians in the May-June 1998 *Journal* issue: "The Noble Red Man" by Mark Twain, and "Life Styles: Native and Imposed" by Kevin Beary.

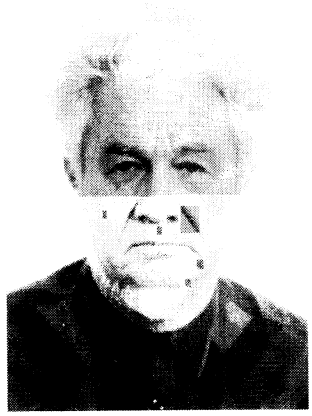
I don't defend a false or romanticized image of the Indians, as propagated, for example, by Hollywood in such films as "Pocahontas" and the others mentioned in the *Journal*. But just as inaccurate as the currently fashionable media image of the "Noble Red Man" is the disgraceful picture drawn by Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens) in the article reprinted from a 1870 issue of *The Galaxy*, apparently a fashionable magazine of the day.

He mocks the Indian for his external appearance and poverty — by any standard the cheapest way of vilifying someone. The one he describes — wearing a stove-pipe hat and a necklace of sardine boxes and oyster-cans — is certainly not an "original" Indian. He is obviously a pathetic victim of alcohol and other "blessings" of an alien, imposed way of life.

Twain's description of the Indian's character is no more fair or objective. He denies him any wisdom whatsoever. The Indian's heart, Twain finds, is a "cesspool of falsehood and treachery." If so, such guile did not keep him from being cheated of his continent-wide living space. As is well known, the (White) American government honored virtually none of the treaties it signed with the Indians. Anyway, the Indian had lived in harmony with Nature for centuries, and would have continued doing so "until the end of time" if Whites had not intervened. By contrast, it is the "civilized" White man who has created conditions that now threaten the future of life itself on our planet.

Twain's description of the Indian's style of combat is despicably misleading. Actually, it more fittingly describes how Whites decimated and subdued the continent's native inhabitants, at least in what is now known as the United States: mass killing of helpless women, children and infants.

Certainly Indians sometimes acted atrociously, but such incidents were often preceded by atrocities committed by White settlers or US army troops. And anyway, it was the Indians' land. They realized that not just the American troops, but even more the White settlers they protected, represented a mortal danger to their land and life as a people. The proof of this is the final outcome: the peoples who once ruled the entire continent were nearly entirely exterminated (as Twain recommended), with the wretched survivors, robbed of their lands, driven into small, mostly barren reservations where, dependent on outside support, they eked out a miserable, forlorn existence.



Zoltán Bruckner

While the motivation for Twain's one-sided polemic may simply have been money, Kevin Beary merely seems eager to defend, at any price, the rapacious imperialistic campaigns of White men (and the Catholic church) that have devastated numerous cultures and cost countless lives. Beary asks whether "Mexican-Americans," "Native Americans" and "African-Americans" lost or gained more as a result of their confrontation with the "West" (that is, their subjugation by the Whites). Even to pose such a the question is an expression of incredible arrogance.

With regard to the "Mexican-Americans" and the "Native Americans," the White conquerors have eradicated not only the original cultures, but also, to a considerable extent, the peoples themselves. In North America, many Indian tribes no longer exist

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Zoltán Bruckner was born in 1930 in Hungary, where he also grew up and studied theology and engineering. He left Hungary in the wake of the 1956 uprising. He holds a Master's degree in civil engineering, and has worked in Austria, the United States and Sweden (where he currently resides). He has long had a keen interest in Indian cultures, which he has developed through extensive reading and study, and in journeys to Mexico and South America.

Worldwide Struggle for Free Speech

Over several decades a tremendous worldwide media and socio-political campaign has made "the Holocaust" a mighty icon of our culture. As a result, in the United States and in much of Europe, anyone who publicly questions the familiar "Six Million" extermination story can expect public scorn and social ostracism.

In the US, for example, Jewish pressure (1990-93) destroyed the career of execution hardware specialist Fred Leuchter because he had concluded, on the basis of a detailed forensic examination of the alleged gas chambers of Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek, that these facilities were never used to kill people as claimed. (See the Winter 1992-93 *Journal*, pp. 421-444, 485-492.) And in Japan, Jewish pressure in 1995 forced one of the country's largest publishing companies to shut down the large-circulation *Marco Polo* magazine because it had carried an article disputing claims of mass killings in gas chambers at Auschwitz. (See "'No Gas Chambers' Says Influential Japanese Magazine," March-April 1995 *Journal*, pp. 2-9.)

Not content with that, Jewish-Zionist groups have waged a international campaign to criminalize public expressions of doubt about Holocaust claims. In 1982 the Institute for Jewish Affairs in London, an agency of the World Jewish Congress, announced an effort to persuade governments to outlaw "Holocaust denial" (*Jewish Chronicle* [London], April 23, 1982). The anti-revisionist "thought crime" laws that were subsequently introduced in several countries reflect the success of this initiative. Today it is illegal in Israel and in about half the countries of Europe, including Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Poland, and Austria, to dispute Holocaust claims.

But this campaign has not always been successful. A plan by the British Labour Party to introduce "Holocaust denial" legislation in the UK was quietly abandoned — for the time being anyway — after it came under considerable public criticism.

In most of the world, including such major countries as the United States, Russia, China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Japan, and Argentina, people are still free publicly to express doubts about the "Six Million" story. Even in Europe, Holocaust skepticism remains legal in Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Ukraine, Britain, Ireland, and Croatia.

Pedro Varela has won an important victory in the on-going worldwide struggle for free thought and expression. Together with his attorneys and supporters, he has persuaded a high court in Spain publicly to acknowledge the obvious: "Holocaust denial" laws violate traditional Western standards of free speech.

— *M.W.*

In their assault on the Europa bookstore on Barcelona's Séneca street, the "anti-fascist" thugs broke through the roll-down steel covering that protected the front door. This photo was taken in the aftermath of the January 16 attack.

Seed of War

"Is there any man or woman — let me say, is there any child — who does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry?"

— President Woodrow Wilson, Sept. 5, 1919.

Collective Will

"The power of a great man lies neither in the physical nor moral qualities of he who possesses it. It must be looked for elsewhere. The power is the collective will of the people transferred by expressed or tacit consent to their chosen leader."

— Tolstoy, *War and Peace*

Were Biological Weapons Used Against Germans at Stalingrad?

Secrets of the Soviet Disease Warfare Program

Of humanity's many noteworthy achievements and inventions, few are as evil and as horrifying as biological warfare: deliberate, government-ordered mass killing of people with lethal diseases. During the Second World War, the Japanese army maintained a secret biological warfare testing program, as did the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1969 President Nixon renounced the use of such weapons, and the US dismantled its extensive biological warfare operation, thereafter restricting research to defensive measures such as immunization.

But as a remarkable new book lays out in grim detail, no regime made greater "progress" in biological warfare than did the Soviet Union. From a unique insider's perspective, a former high-level scientist in the Soviet biological warfare program tells the story in *Biohazard: The Chilling Story of the Largest Covert Biological Weapons Program in the World* (Random House, 1999). Ken Alibek (born Kanatjan Alibekov) joined the Soviet "Biopreparat" program in 1975, and was its first deputy chief from 1988 to 1992, when he defected to the United States.

During the terrible Russian civil war of 1917-1921, in which the fledgling Soviet regime defeated the dispersed and divided anti-Communist "White" forces, as many as ten million people lost their lives. Most of these deaths came not in combat, but instead were caused by famine and disease — especially typhus.

Conscious of this, the revolutionary Soviet government early on put a high priority on diseases as a method of warfare. In 1928 it issued a secret decree ordering the development of typhus as a battlefield weapon. In the decades that followed, the USSR built and maintained a wide-ranging biological warfare program. For example, Alibek relates, Soviet scientists developed a sophisticated plague warfare capability, and an arsenal in Kirov (now Vyatka) stored 20 tons of plague aerosol weaponry (*p. 166*).

Wartime Use Against Germans

While he was a graduate student at the Tomsk Medical Institute (1973-75), Alibek studied Soviet wartime medical records that strongly suggested that the Red Army had used tularemia as a weapon against German troops outside Stalingrad in 1942 (pages 29-31). Tularemia is a highly infectious disease that produces debilitating headaches, nausea and high fevers. If untreated, it can be lethal. It is also hard to extinguish, which makes it attractive to anyone trying to produce biological weapons.

Alibek discovered that the "first victims of tularemia were German panzer troops, who fell ill in such large numbers during the late summer of 1942 that the Nazi campaign in southern Russia ground to a temporary halt." In addition, he relates, thousands of Russian soldiers and civilians living in the Volga region came down with the disease within a week of the initial German outbreak. Never before had there been such a widespread outbreak of the disease in Russia.

Why had so many men first fallen sick with tularemia on the German side only? Furthermore, 70 percent of the Germans infected came down with a pneumonic form of the disease, which (Alibek reports) "could only have been caused by purposeful dissemination."

Whereas there were ten thousand cases of tularemia reported in the Soviet Union in 1941, in the year 1942 — when the battle of Stalingrad was at its height — the number of cases soared to more than one hundred thousand. Then, in 1943, the incidence of the disease returned to ten thousand. The battle for Stalingrad raged from September 1942 until February 2, 1943, when Friedrich von Paulus, commander of the German Sixth Army, surrendered along with 91,000 officers and men (of whom only 6,000 survived Soviet captivity).

Alibek became convinced that "Soviet troops must have sprayed tularemia at the Germans. A sudden change in the direction of the wind, or contaminated rodents passing through the lines, had infected our soldiers and the disease had then spread through the region."

To his professor, a Soviet colonel named Aksyonenko, he explained that the evidence he had found "suggests that this epidemic was caused intentionally." Aksyonenko responded with a stern warning: "Please. I want you to do me a favor and forget you ever said what you just said. I will forget it, too ... Never mention to anyone else what you just told me."

Some years later, an elderly Soviet lieutenant colonel who had worked during the war in the secret bacteriological weapons facility in Kirov told Alibek that a tularemia weapon had been developed there in 1941. He also left him "with no doubt that the weapon had been used." This same officer further suggested that an "outbreak of Q fever among German troops on leave in Crimea in 1943 was the result of another one of the [Soviet] biological warfare agents" (p. 36).

— *M.W.*

General Montgomery's 'Racist Masterplan'

The reputation of Britain's most famous Second World War military commander has suffered a major blow with recent disclosures about his "racist master plan" for postwar Africa.

Sir Bernard Law Montgomery (1887-1976) is perhaps best known for his victory as commander of the British Eighth Army over Afrika Korps leader Erwin Rommel at El Alamein (Egypt) in October-November 1942, and as commander in 1943-45 of British forces in Sicily, France, the Netherlands and Germany. He was promoted to Field Marshal in 1944, and named a viscount in 1946.

In a confidential postwar report to Prime Minister Clement Attlee, "Monty" was scathingly critical of London's policy of encouraging self-government in black Africa. The African, he concluded, "is a complete savage and is quite incapable of developing the country himself."

Montgomery's report, based on a two-month fact-finding tour of eleven African countries in late 1947, was written in his capacity as Chief of the Imperial Defence Staff, a post he held 1946-1948. He recommended a sweeping plan to turn much of sub-Saharan Africa into a British-controlled bulwark against Communism that would be aligned with white-ruled South Africa, which at that time was still dominated by Britain.

Contrary to British policy of the period, Montgomery urged the government to counter popular anti-colonial strivings in Africa: "There is an increasing social and political consciousness developing in the African peoples; this is a very great potential danger and must be watched." His basic attitude toward African autonomy movements is summed up in a recommendation: "We should have no nonsense with the United Nations Organization about Tanganyika; it should be absorbed into the British bosom." He also expressed contempt for black African leaders such as Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, whom he called a pathetic figure.

These revelations were made public in a front-page story, headlined "Secret Papers Reveal Monty's Racist Masterplan," in the prestigious British daily *The Guardian*, January 7, 1999, which was based on recently released papers from Britain's main government archives, the Public Records Office.

Prime Minister Attlee was so alarmed by "Monty's" plan that he called a special meeting of senior ministers to discuss how to handle it. As a result, Montgomery's African fact-finding tour and his embarrassing report were both kept secret, and agents were assigned to watch his lectures to make sure he made no public criticism of government policy.

General Bernard Montgomery (right), chats with American generals George Patton (left) and Omar Bradley, on July 7, 1944, four weeks after the Normandy landings.

Colonial Secretary Arthur Creech Jones replied to Montgomery in a secret memo: "We cannot, of course, have anything like a uniform policy in native administration with the Union of South Africa. They aim at maintaining white supremacy; we aim at building up self-government for the Africans."

In a January 1948 letter, "Monty" responded to the government's rebuttal of his proposal by reaffirming his report's conclusions. He added: "It is obvious we disagree fundamentally ... Time will show which of us is right."

Historians, relatives and former associates of Montgomery have been concerned about the long-term impact of the new revelations. (*Guardian*, Jan. 7, 1999, p. 3). "His reputation is irredeemably damaged," commented historian Lord Chalfont, author of *Montgomery of Alamein*. Nigel Hamilton, Montgomery's official biographer, remarked "... There's no doubt he was a racialist. He did believe in fairly Aryan views."

The Modeler's Bane

How Dangerous is the Swastika?

Since 1945 the swastika has been banned in Germany, where symbols, songs, pictures, slogans and even greetings associated with the Hitler era can earn the offender a stiff fine or even a prison term.

Of course the swastika was hardly unique to Third Reich Germany. Centuries before Hitler adopted it as the symbol of his political movement and, later, of the state, it was familiar around the globe. It was used by the ancient Hellenes and Celts, and displayed by North American Indians, while in India it was revered as a sign of good fortune and prosperity. The word itself comes from the Sanskrit for "well-being."

The German government isn't alone in banning the symbol. For some years now, model enthusiasts have noted its conspicuous absence from plastic model airplanes and other Second World War military equipment models made by some of the leading kit model makers.

During the Second World War, the swastika emblem appeared on the tail fins of German aircraft as well as on the battle flag used by German land and naval forces. In northern Africa, vehicles of the famed Afrika Korps bore a special emblem with a palm tree and a swastika.

Often, though, the symbol is missing from models of these items. Some leading kit model manufacturers, including Revell and Lindberg in the US, and Heller in France, apparently banned the swastika from their products as early as the 1950s.[1] But until just a few years ago, one could purchase a Hasegawa model of the Messerschmitt Me-109 fighter, or of an Afrika Korps half-track, with a swastika appearing as a matter of course in the decal markings.

In recent years, the symbol seems to have disappeared from more and more model kits, both foreign and domestic, and even from the kit box covers. In the case of Academy Minicraft's Korean-made 1:72 scale model of the Me Bf-109E fighter plane, the tail swastika has been replaced with the black cross (*crux quadrata*) that routinely appeared on the wings and sides of German war planes.

A model Me-109 fighter plane made by Heller-Airfix-Humbrol (a French-British amalgamation) simply leaves out the swastika symbol altogether. The Airfix company produces a 1:72 scale model German patrol torpedo boat (or "E-boat") with a battle flag in which a First World War Maltese cross replaces the swastika. Certain older model kits produced by the Heller company of France and the Hasegawa company of Japan have been reissued with the swastika marked out. For example, a Hasegawa model kit of a German Afrika Korps vehicle includes a decal emblem with the characteristic palm tree, but with a diamond replacing the swastika.

What's behind this censorship? The Senior Manager of Product Planning for Revell-Monogram, one of the largest US model kit manufacturers has explained that's because "in Germany it is a national law that this insignia can not [sic] be used, for any reason." However, in 1997 Revell-Monogram revised its policy. In response to "many complaints," the company restored the swastika on all model kits destined for the non-German market.[2]

These days one can find model kits available with and without the emblem. Thus, during a visit in early 1998 to a large hobby shop in Ohio, one model enthusiast found the following German Second World War aircraft kits:[3]

With Swastika

1:48 Me Bf 109 - Revell
1:72 Fw 190A-8 - Revell
1:72 Me 262A - Revell
1:72 Me Bf 109G-10 - Revell
1:72 Me Bf 110G-4 — Revell
1:72 He-111 & P-47B - Lindberg
1:72 Me 109G - Hasegawa
1:72 Fw 190A - Hasegawa
1:72 Fw 190D - Hasegawa
1:72 Ar 234 - Rovex
1:48 Me 410B-1 - Revell

Without Swastika

1:72 Ar 240C-02 - Revell
1:48 Me Bf 109E-3 - Hasegawa
1:48 Me 262A-1a - DML
1:48 Bf-109G-6 - Fujimi
1:72 Do 335 B-6 — DML
1:48 Me 262A-2a/U2 - Trimaster
1:48 He 111H-22 - Revell
1:48 He 111 - Revell
1:72 Ju 88C-4/C-6 - AMT/Ertl
1:72 Me Bf-109E - Academy
1:72 Me 262B - Hasegawa

If censoring the swastika emblem from model kits inhibits the resurrection of National Socialism or "fascism," why hasn't a similar ban on authentic markings been imposed on model kits of Second World War Soviet or Japanese aircraft, warships and military vehicles? Perhaps no one believes there's any danger of a resurrection of Soviet Communism or Japanese imperialism.

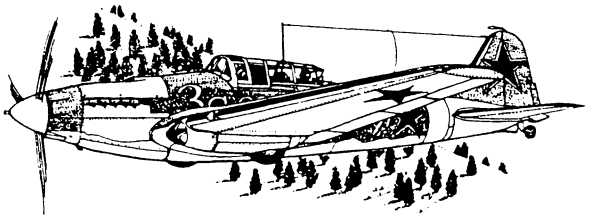
As a matter of course, models of war-era Soviet "Stormovik" or "Yak" war planes or Soviet naval craft have unabashedly displayed the Communist red star or hammer and sickle emblems, while models of war-era Japanese war planes or naval craft have similarly displayed the battle flag bearing the Imperial rising sun emblem.

Only models of German aircraft, flags and vehicles have been affected by the ban on authentic Second World War markings.

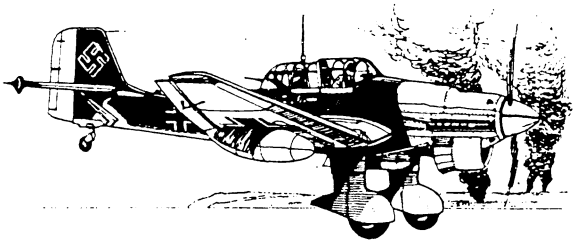
Even more absurd, the double standard censorship isn't confined to swastikas. Recently a Wal-Mart store in Porter, Texas, hastily removed toy German soldiers from its shelves after receiving a complaint from the Anti-Defamation League. The manager of the store abjectly apologized to the powerful Jewish-Zionist organization for having offered the Elite Toy Command Series Field Marshal Erwin Rommel German Soldiers.[4]

Amazingly, the passage of time has brought not a lessening but, in general, an increase in such silly suppression. There was less fear and suppression during the first three decades after the end of the Second World War than there is today.

Even in the case of toys, fidelity to historical accuracy is sacrificed on the alter of "political correctness." In these final years of the Twentieth Century, devotion to "democracy" requires such petty distortions of historical authenticity.



Soviet Red Star: Politically Correct. World War II Soviet Russian "Shturmovik" Ilyushin 2 fighter-bomber.



German Swastika: Politically Incorrect. World War II German "Stuka" Junkers 87 dive-bomber.

Notes

1. During a telephone conversation on Nov. 23, 1998, Mr. Jim Sniffen, a buyer for Orange Blossom Hobbies in Miami, Florida, spoke of marketing of kit models going back to 1956. He told Daniel D. Desjardins (of Waynesville, North Carolina) that Revell and Lindberg in the US, and Heller in France, have apparently not used the swastika in their model kits for several decades.

   An exception is the Revell-Monogram's "Pro Modeler" series. Also, a Heller kit (No. 229) of unknown date owned by Desjardins shows that the company did employ the swastika at one time, but at some later point released this kit with the offending symbol crudely marked out.
2. Letter of April 9, 1998, to Daniel D. Desjardins (Waynesville, N.C.) from Edward F. Sexton, Senior Manager of Product Planning, Revell-Monogram, Inc., Morton Grove, Illinois. Desjardins received no reply to similar letters about the company policy regarding use of the swastika on model kits sent to Hasegawa Seisakusho Company, Ltd. of Japan, to Lindberg Model Company of Toledo, Ohio, and to Heller, S.A., of France.

   One buyer for a major hobby shop in South Florida suggested to Desjardins that the German government implemented its ban to suppress Nazism, further expressing the view that such a ban was probably both rational and necessary.
3. Lovely Treasures Hobby Shop, Fairborn, Ohio, in early 1998.

   Note: DML is a Hong Kong company. Fujimi Europa, of Brussels, Belgium, is headquartered in Toro Shizuoka City, Japan. Trimaster company is in Fujieda-City, Sizuoka 426, Japan. AMT/Ertl company is based in Dyersville, Iowa. Rovex is a United Kingdom company. Academy Minicraft is a Korean company. Lindberg is copyrighted by Craft House Corp. of Toledo, Ohio, but is associated with CE Dexim Hobby-Artikel GmbH of Kirchlengern, Germany.
4. "Nazi Toys Removed," JTA item, *Forward* (New York), Jan. 8, 1999, p. 3.

Moving?

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IHR, P.O. Box 2739, Newport Beach, CA 92659, USA.

"maintained by swords and bayonets." President Lincoln's best argument would seem to have been that South Carolina committed an act of war by firing on Fort Sumter. But the Confederacy did not thereby open general hostilities, and the bombardment warranted at most a limited response, not a full-scale invasion. In fact, Lincoln the politician invited conflict with his decision to resupply the US garrison in Charleston and probably expected, correctly, the incident to unite the Northern public behind him. In short, Fort Sumter did not cause civil war. Rather, it enabled President Lincoln to successfully wage civil war.

Much of the enthusiasm reflected the fact that both sides underestimated the conflict's consequences. Senator James Chestnut of South Carolina, for one, offered to drink all the blood that would be shed as a result of secession. Until the first battle of Bull Run, many thought one battle would decide the war. But then came years of unprecedented carnage. Observed Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts after the hideous Wilderness campaign in May 1864: "If that scene could have been presented to me before the war, anxious as I was for the preservation of the Union, I should have said: 'The cost is too great; erring sisters, go in peace'."

And the cost was too great. Over 600,000 dead; hundreds of thousands of hungry refugees; mass destruction of agriculture, community, and property in the South; extensive violations of civil liberties in the North; and centralization of national power that has steadily intensified over the succeeding century. The sole genuine benefit of the war, the destruction of slavery, was partially overturned after Reconstruction when Southern states reimposed white supremacist rule. Thirty years ago, blacks still couldn't vote in many states. Thus, the Civil War did not actually free African-Americans in all respects. Peaceful separation in 1861 might have resulted in justice for blacks sooner than did coercive union.

Abraham Lincoln's role in history may be memorable, but it is not praiseworthy. His most important decision, to plunge the nation into civil war, was wrong. In the end, he bears primary blame for mass death and destruction then and for the oppressive Leviathan state with which we must contend today.

"I must study politics and war, that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architectures, statuary tapestry and porcelain."

— John Adams

Could *You* Survive a Nuclear Attack?

Why I Survived The A-Bomb

By Akira Kohchi (Albert Kawachi)

Until now, the *real* story of the first nuclear holocaust had not been told. Previous books on the atomic bombings of Hiroshima approached it only obliquely: technical works hailed it as a marvel of nuclear science, and books written from the military perspective honored the men who gave and carried out a difficult order. Even the eyewitness accounts, numbering some two thousand — and almost all yet to be translated from the Japanese — are overwhelmingly stories of *personal* misery. The total picture — the background, scope, and consequences of the catastrophe — has, until now, never been presented.

Why I Survived the A-Bomb tells a unique and fascinating story as seen from inside Japan 48 years ago and today. The author is eminently qualified — he lived through the experience of a nuclear attack and walked through the flaming, radioactive city of Hiroshima!

Holocaust survivor and author Albert Kawachi

Albert Kawachi, a longtime United Nations finance officer, explores the attempts at political and economic justifications for the atom-bombing as he describes the day-to-day living experiences of his family in its wake. His story is dramatic, informative, and historically revisionist.

What was it really like to survive the massive devastation, then deal with the suffering and humiliation wrought by this American doomsday weapon? Who was behind the use of the bomb in the first place? And what did it really accomplish? We need real answers to these hard questions before we speak glibly of defense and disarmament, and before we argue over trade imbalances and deficits, for what happened at Hiroshima and Nagasaki could be our tomorrow.

Chapters include: At the Beginning • The Pacific • The Home Battleground • Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 • The Days After • The Surrender of Japan and Her Recovery • My America and "Pearl Harbor" • Hiroshima and Me • At the End

Why I Survived the A-Bomb

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Letters

Gun Control in the Third Reich

A group called "Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership" (JPFO) says that Third Reich Germany banned private ownership of firearms, and that American laws restricting guns are copied from Hitler's. This organization also quotes Hitler as having said: "This year will go down in history. For the first time a civilized nation will have full gun registration. Our streets will be safer, our police more efficient and the world will follow our lead into the future."

Did Hitler say this? What's the truth about gun control in the Third Reich?

J. R.
Bakersfield, Calif.

This quotation, like so many attributed to Hitler, is phony. The JPFO grossly distorts the reality of firearms ownership during the Third Reich. A good source of information on this subject is *Gun Control in Germany, 1928-1945*, a 45-page booklet by William L. Pierce, available from the IHR for $12, plus $2 for shipping.

During the Third Reich, private citizens could and did own guns. Millions of Germans owned firearms of every kind. It is true that most had to have a permit, but this was required by a firearms ownership law that had been enacted by the Weimar Republic government in 1928, five years before Hitler came to power. A revised firearms law promulgated in 1938, and signed by Hitler, actually loosened the restrictions imposed by the 1928 law.

Throughout the Third Reich era, Hitler and the National Socialist government retained popular trust and support. Even during the final months of the war, with devastating defeat looming ever greater, under conditions of tremendous privation, and as enemy bombers were pummeling her cities, and as foreign armies invaded the homeland, the government responded by trustingly arming all those who could still handle weapons.

In late 1944, just months before the end, Hitler created the *Volkssturm*, a national militia (similar to Britain's "Home Guard") to defend the homeland. All able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 who had not already been called to active military service were enrolled, and even some housewives were hastily trained to use *Panzerfaust* anti-tank weapons.

The most sweeping "gun control" ever imposed in Germany was in 1945, when the Allied occupation authorities ordered Germans to turn in all weapons. Millions of handguns, rifles and other firearms, and even fencing swords, were seized.

— The Editor

Kudos

Kudos for your excellent article, "Michael Eisner and the Disney Empire" [Sept.-Oct. 1998 issue]. We can resonate with your point about the profound impact of Eisner, and those like him, on "the public's barely conscious basic assumptions about life and society." As always, the *Journal* is a revelation of facts.

I. H.
East Bridgewater, Mass.

A 'Detail' of History

For daring to say that gas chambers in wartime German concentration camps are "a detail in the history of the Second World War," Jean Marie Le Pen has twice — in 1987 and again in 1997 — been found guilty and punished with heavy fines. [See "French Courts Punish Holocaust Apostasy," March-April 1998 *Journal*].

Also, authorities in Germany are threatening the French political leader with punishment for having made a similar statement in that country. A public prosecutor in Munich said that Le Pen's remark allegedly "belittling" the Holocaust story violates a German statute prohibiting "incitement to public disorder or racial discrimination." If convicted, Le Pen could be fined or imprisoned for up to as five years. (*New York Times*, Oct. 7, 1998)

For those of us who regard freedom of expression as the linchpin of a free society, such prosecutions are nothing less than an outrage.

What punishments, one wonders, would these modern-day Torquemadas threaten had Le Pen been suspected of the far greater heresy of "Holocaust denial"?

One can only speculate whether Winston Churchill would have been accused of similar thought crimes had such laws been in effect when he published his monumental six-volume history, *The Second World War* (1948-1954). As a major player in that conflict, he was privy to far more information than Le Pen. Yet, in spite of that, or perhaps because of it, he went much further than Le Pen in "belittling" the Holocaust.

Churchill *ignored* it. Except for a single reference to the deportation of Hungarian Jews in mid-1944, he devotes not a single line in this work of more than three thousand pages to what is purported to be the most heinous crime in the entire history of mankind.

Churchill was doubtless aware of the claims made during and just after the war about mass killings of Jews, and certainly he knew of the grisly details of the alleged slaughter that were "proven" before the Nuremberg Tribunal: six million Jewish deaths, homicidal gas chambers, bars of human soap, and so forth. Yet he was silent about all that.

Similarly, as Robert Faurisson has pointed out ["The Detail," March-April 1998 *Journal*, pp. 19-20], both Eisenhower and DeGaulle, as well as scores of lesser wartime figures, made no

mention at all of gas chambers in their memoirs, or otherwise supported claims of a massive program of state-sponsored genocide that utilized homicidal gas chambers as the main instrument of death. Such a lack of contemporary corroboration by the important players is analogous to finding no reference to the crucifixion in the New Testament.

M. J.
Great Neck, New York

Had No Idea

For some time I had known that some of Russia's big magnates were Jews. But it wasn't until I read Eduard Topol's open letter to Boris Berezovsky [in the Nov.-Dec. 1998 *Journal*] that I realized just how total Jewish political and economic power had become there. Also, I had no idea of just how catastrophic had been the fall in living standards suffered by ordinary Russians.

Even though I am Jewish myself, I'm not at all sure I would blame the ordinary people of Russia if they ever take it into their heads to rid their country of Jews (and I mean completely).

R. P.
Derry, New Hampshire

John Birch Society Fear

I was angered but not surprised by the John Birch Society attack against the IHR and Holocaust revisionism [reported in the Nov.-Dec. 1998 *Journal*, pp. 26-28].

During the ten years or so that I was a JBS member, I found that the Society was always very afraid to touch the Jewish issue or Zionism. While I reject "hate," I also don't believe in being silent about historical issues or current affairs to placate Jews or, for that matter, any ethnic or religious group.

Given the limited impact of the JBS these days, I wouldn't worry much about its pathetic attack. So marginal has it become that most people don't even realize that the JBS still exists. Actually, most rank and file Birchers would probably support revisionism and the IHR's work if they understood it. For decades, though, the JBS leadership has pumped them with so much kooky "conspiracy" paranoia that many reflexively reject any view that doesn't conform with the JBS dogma of "insiders" plotting. These misguided people have been prone to believe, for example, that the Soviets told 1960s bands such as the Rolling Stones, the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane what songs to write and play.

Again, keep up the good work. Enclosed is another small donation to the case of truth.

M. R.
West Milford, N.J.

Missed Points

John Weir's review of *Scapegoats: A Defense of Kimmel and Short at Pearl Harbor* [Nov.-Dec. 1997 *Journal*] was competent, but of course it did not bring up a number of points. It didn't mention, for example, that *Scapegoats* author Edward Beach, although an establishment figure, devoted almost a page to praising George Morgenstern's work, *Pearl Harbor: The Story of the Secret War*, without one qualifying evasive word — the first time I have ever seen such a display. Capt. Beach obviously shares Morgenstern's interpretation of the Pearl Harbor story, but at the same time wants to eulogize Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill for their subsequent war to "save civilization." In my view, these two hearties went very far toward destroying civilization.

In the last volume of his mighty post-World War I opus, *The World Crisis*, Churchill credited the Kaiser's Germany with taking on the manpower and resources of "five continents." The Germans did it again, 1939-1945, but this time around Churchill was not so generous. His adversary this time were simply "Narzie gangsters." World War II has never really ended. Maybe German self-respect will return some day to the point where they will do some "revising" of their own about this matter.

These days I define "genocide" as something done by someone I don't like who lives a long ways away. One's neighbors are never accused of genocide.

James J. Martin
Colorado Springs, Col.

Interesting

I have only occasionally read your magazine, but find it extremely interesting. I also admire your courage in posting the material you do on your web site. Keep up the good work.

L. D. W.
[by Internet]

May Freedom Ring

I'm glad to have found you in the web. Thanks for the information you guys have been putting out for years. Every country, and every people, has a right to its own destiny — including the United States. May freedom ring — the true freedom the ancestors of this country created: freedom in keeping with our nature as human beings.

D. D.
Texas
[by Internet]

A Salute

Just a few lines to let you know how much I value the courage and integrity of your publication — honesty seldom seen in a "holocaustized" world. To everybody at the *Journal*, a salute of honor.

E. B.
Cincinnati, Ohio

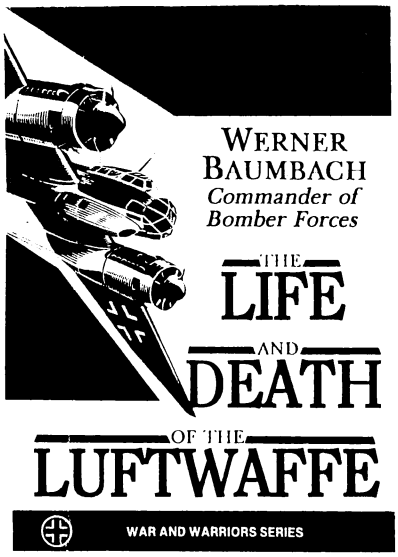
We welcome letters from readers. We reserve the right to edit for style and space. Write: Editor, P.O. Box 2739, Newport Beach, CA 92659, USA, or e-mail us at **editor@ihr.org**

A Stirring Narrative of Combat

An Inside Account of the Triumph and Tragedy of the Third Reich's Air Force

The Life and Death of the Luftwaffe tells the riveting story of the meteoritic rise and calamitous fall of one of history's great air forces, as told by one of its most decorated and honored officers, Colonel Werner Baumbach.

A combat pilot who braved enemy fighters and anti-aircraft fire to strike at targets in virtually every European theater of the Second World War, Baumbach was also such a superb organizer and keen strategist that he was appointed, at the age of 28, chief of the Luftwaffe's bomber command.



All of the Luftwaffe's celebrated campaigns are here: the blitzkriegs against Poland, France and the Low Countries; the Battle of Britain; the massive invasion of Soviet Russia and the hard-fought retreat; the air wars over the Atlantic, the Arctic, and the Mediterranean; and the desperate defense of the Reich against merciless attack by British and American bombers.

Baumbach was one of the most successful fighter pilots of the Second World War, and the first to earn the coveted Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords. He was also a major figure in the fateful decision-making that shaped Germany's desperate struggle against the combined Allied forces. He played a key role in reorganizing the Luftwaffe's bomber arm.

In addition to memorable descriptions of dangerous combat missions, in this memoir he gives a frank and often critical inside account of Germany's air war. He provides an inside look at the heated disputes among the Reich's top military figures over strategy and tactics, with first-hand assessments of Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, Speer and other high-ranking Third Reich officials.

Baumbach played an important role in the development of Germany's "wonder weapons," some of which he tested himself. Here he tells of German jet fighters, guided missles, the V-1 "buzz bomb," the V-2 rocket, and other path-breaking armaments that laid the basis for and modern air war and space exploration.

He provides fascinating details of German plans for amazing new weapons and tactics, including trans-Atlantic air raids against New York City and the Panama Canal, the training of Kamikaze-style suicide pilots, and a plan for piggy-backing fighters and unmanned bombers to strike at distant targets.

After the war Baumbach barely escaped trial as a "war criminal," even as British newspapers were calling him "the German Lawrence of the Second World War."

Essential reading for anyone interested in the German Luftwaffe and World War II.

The Life and Death of the Luftwaffe

by Werner Baumbach
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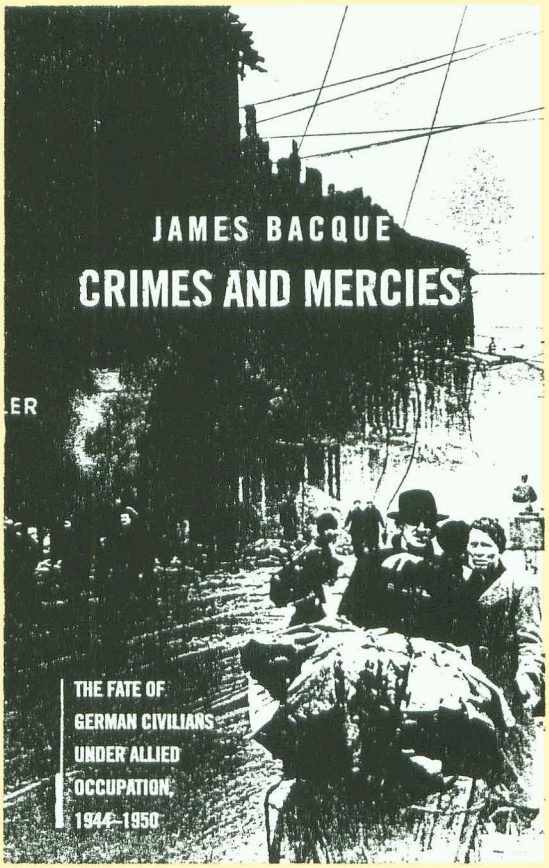
A Concealed Holocaust!

Crimes and Mercies

In this powerful new book, Canadian historian James Bacque presents detailed evidence, much of it newly uncovered, to show that some nine million Germans died as a result of Allied starvation and expulsion policies in the first five years after the Second World War — a total far greater than the long-accepted figures.

These deaths are still being concealed and denied, writes Bacque, especially by American and British authorities.

Crimes and Mercies — a handsome work, illustrated and well-referenced — is a devastating indictment of Allied, and especially American, occupation policy in defeated postwar Germany.



Some 15 million Germans fled or were brutally expelled in the greatest act of "ethnic cleansing" in history, a human catastrophe in which some two million were killed or otherwise perished. Then, under the notorious "Morgenthau Plan" and its successor policies, the Allies carried out a massive looting of Germany, and even prevented German civilians from growing sufficient food to feed themselves.

Bacque shows, for example, that General Eisenhower, in violation of the Geneva Convention, in May 1945 forbade German civilians to take food to prisoners starving to death in American camps. He threatened the death penalty for anyone feeding prisoners.

Bacque also describes the terrors of the postwar camps in Poland where children and other German civilians lost their lives.

Written with fervor, compassion and humanity, and making use of never-before cited records in Moscow archives, James Bacque exposes a little-known but important chapter of 20th century history. He builds upon the revelations of his startling 1989 study, *Other Losses,* which presented evidence to show that hundreds of thousands of German prisoners of war died as a result of cruel and illegal mistreatment by American, British and French authorities.

American historian Alfred M. de Zayas, author of *Nemesis at Potsdam* and *The German Expellees* (now titled *The Terrible Secret),* provides a valuable foreword.

Crimes and Mercies:

The Fate of German Civilians Under Allied Occupation, 1944-1950

by James Bacque

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